Source-Readers in American History — No. III

HOW OUR GRANDFATHERS LIVED


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Source-Readers in American History — No. 3

HOW OUR GRANDFATHERS LIVED

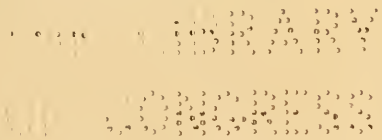
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WITH MANY ILLUSTRATIONS



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Preface

VOLUMES I and II of this series of Source Readers deal with periods beyond the memory of living persons; but the romance and interest of American life and American history are not at all confined to the beginnings, and this volume relates chiefly to the first half of the nineteenth century. Our grandfathers and even our fathers passed lives full of interest and of unusual incidents : the school, the field, the forest, the hunt, the stage-coach, and the steamboat are already remote from our present generation. Distinct historic incidents are also abundant, especially during the War of 1812, and have been freely used in this volume. The selections on American education will be novel to most children, and represent some picturesque conditions, now for the most part outgrown.

Special pains have been taken to illustrate the remarkable life of the western frontier, now fast becoming only a tradition. As in the other volumes of the series, nothing has been added to these extracts, although there are omissions and occasionally changes of words or phrases.

ALBERT BUSHNELL HART.

CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS,
August, 1902.

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INTRODUCTION FOR TEACHERS

The place of sources in secondary schools is already assured, and teachers using them are ready to testify to their incalculable value in teaching history; but to put sources into the hands of grammar school children is, in the minds of many teachers, quite another matter. If, however, sources give vividness and reality to the study of history when pursued in the higher schools, why may not the same hold true for elementary schools, provided the selections are made carefully and are adapted to the age and understanding of the pupils?

In my own experience I have found the use of such sources as Bradford's Journal, for instance, invaluable both for giving reality to the study of the early years of the Plymouth settlement and also for teaching children where to go to settle a disputed point. I have put the Journal in its antiquated form, as far as spelling and construction are concerned, into the hands of eighth grade pupils with excellent result; it was gratifying to find that, when two text-books disagreed on some point, the pupils turned at once to Bradford for aid. Several of my students who, in connection with their course at the Normal School, have taught in the grammar grades of the Worcester schools, have brought me testimony as to the assistance they have found in the sources — particularly in connection with colonial history — which they have put into the pupil's hands.

This series of readers contains sources adapted for use

in elementary schools, and much study of the ordinary history text-book would fail to do what is so easily done by these selections. Moreover, it is worth while to make children acquainted with some of the people who wrote and from whose works we gain a knowledge of the past. Furthermore, sources cultivate the imagination, because they have the freshness of eye-witnesses, and so vitalize history.

In the preparation of this volume, dealing as it does with later periods than either of former ones of this series, fewer changes have been made. Occasionally the spelling and phrasing have been modified, but in general the selections have not been changed in any particular. The use of this series of Source Readers as a regular reading-book has been explained in the first volume. I shall therefore confine myself to suggestions for the use of this third volume in connection with the formal study of history, a purpose to which it is well adapted.

When the Revolution, for instance, is studied, selections 1, 2, and 3, rich in allusions to persons of that time, will give an added interest to the work. Then such selections as Brissot de Warville's Visit to Mt. Vernon (No. 15), showing the simplicity of Washington's life, and Jefferson's Letters to his Daughters (No. 100) give a different idea of the personality of these men from that gained from the ordinary study of history. The anecdotes of Hancock (No. 5) are of value in the same way, and may also be noted as containing a hint of the feeling regarding State Rights in 1790.

For illustrating the War of 1812 there is a wealth of material. The Pleasures of Impressment (No. 73) will naturally illustrate the causes of the war, while such events as the capture of the *Guerrière* can be found both in poetry and in prose, the latter being the official an-

nouncement. Most children old enough to use this book will probably be familiar with the *Star-Spangled Banner* (No. 80), but if not, it would be worth while to vary the reading by learning to sing what should be familiar to every grammar school pupil in the country.

Practically the whole of Part VII should be used in connection with the War of 1812. Dolly Madison's letter describing the saving of Washington's portrait (No. 90) deserves especial attention. One can fairly see the impatience of Mr. Carroll as he waited while the painting was secured, and can almost hear the tramp of the invading army. Such a selection as this does more to render conditions of war vivid than pages of the ordinary text-book. Although there are not many descriptions of battle-fields, two selections are given (Nos. 96 and 97) which show the seamy side of war. It is worth while, sometimes, to let children get a glimpse of some other phase than the heroic. It will be noticed also that testimony from other than American writers has been sought. Extracts have been made from accounts by British officers or sympathizers (Nos. 89, 92, 96). It is worth while to call the pupil's attention to this fact.

Another feature of this book which adapts it for use in history study is the attention paid to the development of the country. The rude life of one hundred years ago is strikingly presented in Breck's account of the Mad-Caps of Boston (No. 4), while Parts III and IV are rich in contrasts with present conditions. To the majority of children to-day a Canal Trip (No. 36) is an unknown experience, and those familiar with the comforts of the modern steamship will enjoy the description of an early steamboat (No. 35) and such experiences in ocean travelling as Abigail Adams gives in her letters (No. 72). Moreover, the life described is not confined to our section alone; it ranges

from the receptions of prominent men (No. 5) to an account of Philadelphia fashions (No. 6); from life in Mexico (No. 9) to that in New York (Nos. 7 and 13) and Philadelphia (No. 8); while foreign conditions are touched upon in such a selection as A Japanese Reception (No. 86).

Old customs, long since given up, are here brought to the notice of the pupil for the purpose of adding vividness to the life of the past. Especially interesting are such old customs as those described in The Bells (No. 22), and the old method of celebrating New Year's Day in New York (No. 13). The accounts of such people as the Shaking Quakers (No. 19) and the ceremonies at the Moravian schools portrayed in The Children's Love Feast (No. 101) are particularly good because of their unique descriptions.

Primitive life is closest to a child's understanding: hence the enjoyment of folk-lore, of fairy tale, of adventure and struggle on the frontier. The life and customs of the Indians, with specimens of their folk-lore, are found in abundance in Part V, while the craving for stories of adventure may be met with in such selections as the Experiences of a Hunter during a Storm (No. 27); Boone's Adventures (No. 49); In a Cave (No. 43); and Hewitt's Escape from the Indians (No. 60).

Every teacher finds that stories of child life appeal most strongly to children, and where could a more charming story be found than in Sheldon's Incidents in the Life of a Bound Boy (No. 21), with its pictures of the Thanksgiving festival, the work and play, the food and clothing of a boy who lived over a hundred years ago? A contrast with this home life may be found in the experiences of a boy at sea (Nos. 75, 82), while the Little Indian Captive (No. 57) will serve to make the dangers of frontier life

real, as well as to show a side of Indian character that is seldom portrayed.

The accounts of school life are rich in contrasts: in the Old Fashioned Reading Book (No. 26) with all its absurdities; in Daniel Webster's account of his school life (No. 108), with its list of books and the confession of his difficulty in making a declamation; in the picture of the Last Day of School (No. 111); and in the quaint list of books, of branches taught, and the careful attention to manners that the Very Young School Mistress gives (No. 114) there is a wealth of material for making vivid the school life of the early part of the last century. Moreover, we have nearly all varieties of school life given, — that in the country (No. 114), at a French convent (No. 116), at a boarding school (No. 115), and at college (Nos. 105, 112).

It would be worth while to have a class represent in drawings the exterior and interior of the District School of 1833 (No. 109), following the descriptions given. Let me suggest also that a miniature log cabin be built in connection with the study of frontier life (No. 47). I have seen admirable reproductions of the settlement of Plymouth made with the moulding-board and miniature houses, the latter copying as closely as possible the rude houses of those early days. Special topics, suggested by many of these selections, could be assigned to individual pupils who could report to the class. Such work is valuable training both to the one who prepares the subject and to those to whom it is given. The note-book, a necessary adjunct to all such study, will be found especially helpful in this work.

Let me emphasize, as my last point, the fact that this book supplies a need. No grammar school history attempts to deal at any length with the *life* of the people.

General, and usually brief, accounts are given, but they lack the reality and the vividness here obtained through the words of the actors themselves. The life of a people is a far more important study, certainly for children, than wars and rumors of wars.

ANNIE BLISS CHAPMAN.

HOW OUR GRANDFATHERS LIVED

PART I

IN TOWN

1. An American Lady in London

By Abigail Adams (1785)

To amuse you then, my dear niece, I will give you an account of the dress of the ladies at the ball of the Comte d'Adhémar; as your cousin tells me that she some time ago gave you a history of the birthday and ball at Court, this may serve as a counterpart. Though, should I attempt to compare the apartments, St. James's would fall as much short of the French Ambassador's, as the Court of his Britannic Majesty does of the splendor and magnificence of that of his Most Christian Majesty. I am sure I never saw an assembly room in America, which did not exceed that at St. James's in point of elegance and decoration; and, as to its fair visitors, not all their blaze of diamonds, set off with Parisian rouge, can match the blooming health, the sparkling eye, and modest deportment of the dear girls of my native land.

St. James = The royal palace in London.

Most Christian Majesty = King of France.

As to the dancing, the space they had to move in gave them no opportunity to display the grace of a minuet, and the full dress of long court-trains and enormous hoops, you well know were not favorable

for country dances, so that I saw them at every disadvantage; not so the other evening. They were much more properly clad; — silk waists, gauze or white or painted tiffany coats decorated with ribbon, beads, or flowers, as fancy directed, were chiefly worn by the young ladies. Hats turned up at the sides with diamond loops and buttons of steel, large bows of ribbons and wreaths of flowers, displayed themselves to much advantage upon the heads of some of the prettiest girls England can boast. The light from the lustres is more favorable to beauty than daylight, and the color acquired by dancing more becoming than rouge, as fancy dresses are more favorable to youth than the formality of a uniform.

There was as great a variety of pretty dresses, borrowed wholly from France, as I have ever seen; and amongst the rest, some with sapphire-blue satin waists, spangled with silver, and laced down the back and seams with silver stripes; white satin petticoats trimmed with black and blue velvet ribbon; an odd kind of head-dress, which they term the "helmet of Minerva." I did not observe the bird of wisdom, however, nor do I know whether those who wore the dress had suitable pretensions to it.

The owl.

"And pray," say you, "how were my aunt and cousin dressed?" If it will gratify you to know, you shall hear. Your aunt, then, wore a full-dress court cap without the lappets, in which was a wreath of white flowers, and blue sheafs, two black and blue flat feathers (which cost her half a guinea apiece, but that you need not tell of), three pearl pins, bought for Court, and a pair of pearl earrings, the cost of them — no matter what; less than diamonds, however. A sapphire-blue *demi-saison* with a satin stripe,



A LADY OF THE REPUBLIC.

sack and petticoat trimmed with a broad black lace; crape flounce, etc.; leaves made of blue ribbon, and trimmed with white floss; wreaths of black velvet ribbon spotted with steel beads, which are much in fashion, and brought to such perfection as to resemble diamonds; white ribbon also in the Vandyke style, made up of the trimming, which looked very elegant; a full-dress handkerchief, and a bouquet of roses. "Full gay, I think, for my aunt." That is true, Lucy, but nobody is old in Europe. I was seated next the Duchess of Bedford, who had a scarlet satin sack and coat, with a cushion full of diamonds, for hair she has none, and she is but seventy-six, too.

Well, now for your cousin; a small, white Leghorn hat, bound with pink satin ribbon; a steel buckle and band which turned up at the side, and confined a large pink bow; a large bow of the same kind of ribbon behind; a wreath of full-blown roses round the crown, and another of buds and roses withinside the hat, which being placed at the back of the hair, brought the roses to the edge; you see it clearly; one red and black feather, with two white ones, completed the head-dress. A gown and coat of Chambéri gauze, with a red satin stripe over a pink waist, and coat flounced with crape, trimmed with broad point and pink ribbon; wreaths of roses across the coat; gauze sleeves and ruffles. But the poor girl was so sick with a cold, that she could not enjoy herself, and we retired about one o'clock without waiting for supper, by which you have lost half a sheet of paper, I dare say.

Lord North was prime minister during the Revolution.

I cannot close without describing to you Lady North and her daughter. She is as large as Captain Colton's wife, and much such a woman, with a much

fuller face, of the color and complexion of Mrs. Colton, who formerly lived with your uncle Palmer, and looks as if porter and beef stood no chance before her; she was dressed in white satin, trimmed with scarlet ribbon. Miss North is not so large, nor quite so red, but has a very small eye, with the most impudent face you can possibly form an idea of, joined to manners so masculine that I was obliged frequently to recollect that line of Dr. Young's,

"Believe her dress; she's not a grenadier,"

to persuade myself that I was not mistaken.

Thus, my dear girl, you have an account which perhaps may amuse you a little. You must excuse my not copying; I fear, now, I shall not get nearly all my letters ready, — my pen very bad, as you see; and I am engaged three days this week, — to a rout at the Baroness de Nolken's, the Swedish minister's, to a ball on Thursday evening, and to a dinner on Saturday. Do not fear that your aunt will become dissipated, or in love with European manners; but, as opportunity offers, I wish to see this European world in all its forms that I can with decency. I still moralize with Yorick, or with one more experienced, and say, "Vanity of vanities, all is vanity."

2. Presentation at St. James

By Abigail Adams (1785)

Congratulate me, my dear sister, it is over. I was too much fatigued to write a line last evening. At two o'clock we went to the circle, which is in the drawing-room of the Queen. We passed through

several apartments, lined as usual with spectators upon these occasions. Upon entering the antechamber, the Baron de Lynden, the Dutch Minister, who has been often here, came and spoke with me. A Count Sarsfield, a French nobleman, with whom I was acquainted, paid his compliments. As I passed into the drawing-room, Lord Carmarthen and Sir Clement Cotterel Dormer were presented to me. Though they had been several times here, I had never seen them before. The Swedish and the Polish ministers made their compliments, and several other gentlemen; but not a single lady did I know until the Countess of Effingham came, who was very civil.

There were three young ladies, daughters of the Marquis of Lothian, who were to be presented at the same time, and two brides. We were placed in a circle round the drawing-room, which was very full, I believe two hundred persons present. Only think of the task! The royal family have to go round to every person, and find small talk enough to speak to all of them, though they very prudently speak in a whisper, so that only the person who stands next you can hear what is said. The King enters the room, and goes round to the right; the Queen and Princesses to the left. The lord in waiting presents you to the King; and the lady in waiting does the same to her Majesty.

King George III.

The King is a personable man, but, my dear sister, he has a certain countenance, which you and I have often remarked; a red face and white eyebrows. The Queen has a similar countenance, and the numerous royal family confirm the observation. Persons are not placed according to their rank in the drawing-room, but promiscuously; and when the King comes

in, he takes persons as they stand. When he came to me, Lord Onslow said, "Mrs. Adams;" upon which I drew off my right-hand glove, and his Majesty saluted my left cheek; then asked me if I had taken a walk to-day. I could have told his Majesty that I had been all the morning preparing to wait upon him; but I replied, "No, Sire." "Why, don't you love walking?" says he. I answered, that I was rather indolent in that respect. He then bowed, and passed on.



PRINCESS AUGUSTA SPINNING.

It was more than two hours after this before it came to my turn to be presented to the Queen. The circle was so large that the company were four hours standing. The Queen was evidently embarrassed when I was presented to her. I had disagreeable feelings too. She, however, said, "Mrs. Adams, have you got into your house? Pray, how do you like the situation of it?" Whilst the Princess Royal looked compassionate, and asked me if I was not much fatigued; and observed that it was a very full drawing-room. Her sister, who came next, Princess Augusta, after having asked your niece if she was ever in England before, and her answering "Yes," inquired of me how long ago, and supposed it was when she was very young. And all this is said with much affability, and the ease and freedom of old acquaintance.

The manner in which they make their tour round the room is, first, the Queen, the lady in waiting behind her, holding up her train; next to her, the Princess Royal; after her, Princess Augusta, and their lady in waiting behind them. They are pretty, rather than beautiful, well shaped, with fair complexions, and a look of the King's countenance. The two sisters look much alike; they were both dressed in black and silver silk, with a silver netting upon the coat, and their heads full of diamond pins. The Queen was in purple and silver. She is not well shaped nor handsome. As to the ladies of the Court, rank and title may compensate for want of personal charms; but they are, in general, very plain, ill-shaped, and ugly; but don't you tell anybody that I say so. If one wants to see beauty, one must go to Ranelagh; there it is collected, in one bright constellation. There were two ladies very elegant, at Court, — Lady Salisbury and Lady Talbot; but the observation did not in general hold good, that fine feathers make fine birds. I saw many who were vastly richer dressed than your friends, but I will venture to say, that I saw none neater or more elegant.

A pleasure garden.

3. A Little Patriot and her Papa

By Abigail Adams (1785)

London, June 1st, 1785. To-day my father went with Lord Carmarthen to the Palace, where he found many gentlemen, known to him before. Lord C. introduced him to his majesty, George III. Papa made his speech when he presented his letter; his

majesty was affected, and said, "Sir, your words have been so proper, upon this occasion, that I cannot but say I am gratified that you are the man chosen to be the Minister."

June 4th. This is the anniversary of his majesty's birth; consequently there was a Levee at St. James. On this day their majesties speak to every person present. The King speaks first to the Foreign Ministers. He conversed a quarter of an hour with the Spanish Minister, upon music, of which he said he was passionately fond, particularly of Handel's; he respected the memory of Handel, for he owed to him the greatest happiness of his life, and observed that Handel had said of him when young "That young man will preserve my music." My father observed that he had never heard anything like conversation at court before. One of the Ambassadors who had attended at the French court thirty years, said Monsieur, the king's brother, had asked every time he had been to court, which was generally every Tuesday, "have you come from Paris to-day?" and no other question.

September 2d. About twelve o'clock, Mrs. Smith, from Clapham, and Miss B. called upon us. Mamma was just dressing, so I had to appear. Miss B. began to question me, as to which country I liked best, France or England? I would not give a preference. "But you undoubtedly prefer England to America?" "I must indeed confess, Miss, that I do not at present." Was it possible! I acknowledged the excellencies of this country. There was more to please and gratify the senses; but I had formed such friendships and attachments in America, as would ever render it dear to me. "But surely, the culture

is carried to a much greater degree of perfection here than in America." "Granted." "And you must," said Miss B., very pertly, "find a great difference between America and this country?" "In what, pray, Miss?" said I. "Why, in the general appearance, in the people, their manners, customs, behavior, and in everything." "Indeed," said I, "I do not; there is so great a similarity in the manners of the people, in the two countries, that I should take them for one. If anything, I find a greater degree of politeness and civility in America, than in the people of this country. And the lower class of people in America are infinitely superior to the lower class of people here." Their astonishment was great — was it possible I could think so! Surely the distressing war had been an impediment to all improvement and education.

Dr. Bancroft came in and passed an hour. After he had gone, we had some conversation upon the pictures below. Papa said they were spoiled; he was not at all content with his own, yet thought it the best that had ever been taken of him. No one had yet caught his character. The ruling principles in his moral character, were candor, probity, and decision. I think he discovered more knowledge of himself than usually falls to the lot of man; for, from my own observation, I think these are characteristic of him; and I add another, which is sensibility. I have never discovered a greater proportion of candor in any character. I hope if I inherit any of his virtues it may be this; it is a necessary attendant through life. In whatever intercourse we have with society, we find it necessary in a greater or less degree; and in the mind of a woman, I esteem it particularly amiable.

4. Mad-caps

By Samuel Breck (1787)

On my journey to Boston I chose the water-conveyance, and reached my native town on the second of July, 1787, after an absence of four years and a half. I found my dear parents and family well. On the Fourth of July, being a national holiday, there was a great parade on the Common opposite to my father's house, and a vast assemblage at the beautiful residence of the governor of the State, the celebrated John Hancock. This distinguished man lived in a spacious stone house, built by his uncle. My father introduced me to His Excellency and to all the principal people of the town. Five or six hundred militiamen paraded in rifle-frocks and queer dresses in honor of the day; a public oration was delivered by Harrison Gray Otis, I believe; and in the evening squibs and fireworks closed the fête.

A few weeks after my arrival, and before I had become acquainted with the boisterous manners of the young men of those days, Isaac Parker, the present chief justice of Massachusetts, invited me to dine with him. He was then a law-student, and the company was composed of lads under age who were preparing for various pursuits in life. There was more noisy mirth after dinner than was in good taste; but it was the fashion of the day to drink hard and then kick up a row. Parker resided at the north end of the town, and being in the neighborhood of Charlestown, it was agreed by the company to adjourn to a drinking-house on Breed's Hill. Thither we went, a good deal tipsy, making a zigzag course over the

The great temperance movement began about forty years later.

bridge, and ascending the hill by a steep and narrow street.

I was sober; most of our party were otherwise, and by their noise and insolence in passing a tailor's house raised the anger of the whole shopboard, who swore they would cuff and trim us, and send us home with a stitch in our sides. Down jumped half a dozen slipshod snips, who threw at our heads glass bottles, stones and other missiles, and after a short contest drove us back to Boston somewhat sobered. Near the concert-hall we met an acquaintance named Minot, who prided himself on his spirit in an affray. We told him what had happened, and such was his rage at our defeat that he went off determined to avenge it. Having reached the bridge, he met two men who smelt of cabbage, as the boys said, and very unceremoniously asked them where they were going.

"We are going," said they, "to take out writs against a parcel of wild chaps who have insulted us." "You are?" cried Minot. "I am happy to meet you;" and while he spoke he laid one fellow over the head with his cane, which brought him to the ground, and drove the other back to Charlestown; after which, proud of his victory, he returned home. And so did I, without thinking any more about the business.

The next morning, however, my father came up to my chamber with a very grave countenance, holding in his hand a newspaper in which our party was lampooned in verse and strongly censured in prose. Nor was this the worst.

"Prepare yourself," said my father, "to pay a heavy fine and spend a few months in prison, for there is a criminal prosecution on foot, which will end in the punishment you all deserve." I soon con-

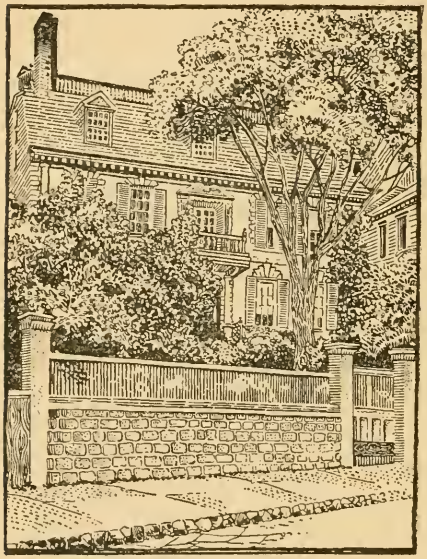
vinced that excellent parent that I was a non-combatant, which was confirmed by my name being omitted in the suit that was brought against all the others, including Sam Minot, the volunteer. They were summoned to Concord, about twenty miles from Boston, and condemned to pay twenty dollars each. Minot, some three or four years afterward, I met at Amsterdam, where he had been engaged unsuccessfully, I think, in commerce. He was the same harum-scarum fellow then as before, and died young. Most of the other boys of that frolic who grew up, distinguished themselves in their various walks in life, and those who survive are now the magistrates, legislators, fathers and venerable square-toes of the community wherever they reside.

5. Anecdotes of John Hancock

By Samuel Breck (1790)

At the time when Admiral de Ponderez was lying with his fleet in the harbor of Boston, the great Washington, who was President of the United States, arrived in the town. He like a kind father was visiting the vast country he had been called upon to govern. His reception was most cordial. A broad arch was purposely erected, with appropriate mottoes, across Marlborough street, opposite to the old State House, under which he passed in great state, and entering the State House showed himself from the balcony to the thousands who stood below. I placed myself on this occasion in the front window of a handsome brick church situated almost opposite. From that church

I saw everything, heard the fine anthems composed for the occasion, and gazed upon the majestic person and beneficent features of our immortal and unique President — beloved, admired by everybody. The procession moved from the State House to the house selected for his residence. It was a handsome brick building at the corner of Tremont and Court streets. A beautiful company of light infantry, commanded by Harrison Gray Otis, served as a guard of honor and escort.



THE HANCOCK HOUSE.

Governor Hancock had prepared a great dinner at his house, to which he invited the French admiral, the officers of his fleet and the principal citizens. A notion had got into Hancock's head that the governor of a State was a kind of sovereign in his own territory, and that it would be derogatory to his station to pay the first visit to any one, even to the President of the United States; and acting always by this rule, he sent an invitation to General Washington to dine with him, but excused himself from calling on him, saying that

sickness detained him at home, thus covering by a lame apology the resolution which he dared not openly exercise toward the President.

Washington, who had received some hint of this intended etiquette, was not very likely to submit to it; therefore, when he arrived at his residence he dismissed Captain Otis's company, and instead of going to dine with the governor, sent his aid-de-camp, Major William Jackson, with a message declining the invitation, and intimating that if Hancock's health permitted him to receive company, it would admit of his visiting him.

My father dined at the governor's that day, and about sunset brought home Admiral de Ponderez and several officers, who spent the evening with us. The dinner party went off heavily, as every one was disappointed at not meeting with the President. Meantime, the French ships of war in the harbor were illuminated with variegated lamps, and bonfires blazed in every direction. The ladies wore bandeaux, cestuses and ribbons stamped and worked in with the name of Washington, some in gold and silver, and others with pearls. The utmost joy and enthusiastic affection pervaded all classes. Every honor and attention was lavishly bestowed on the distinguished guest.

Bandeaux= fillets for the head.
Cestus= girdle.

About ten o'clock in the evening I accompanied the admiral to the wharf, where he took boat for his ship. As we passed the residence of the President, De Ponderez expressed his surprise at the absence of all sort of parade or noise. "What!" said he, "not even a sentinel? In Europe," he added, "a brigadier-general would have a guard; and here this great man, the chief of a nation, dispenses with all military show, so much insisted on with us!"

The next day was Sunday, and immediately after morning service Mr. Joseph Russell, an intimate acquaintance of the governor's, called at our house and told my father that His Excellency had swallowed the bitter pill, and was then on his way to visit the President; to which step he had been urged by a report that people generally condemned his false pride.

Hancock, who was a distant relation of ours, possessed winning manners and fascinating conversation; yet with a hospitable heart and all the suavity of polished breeding, he was so much swayed by state importance that he forfeited occasionally his claim to those amiable qualities. An example has just been given in the case of Washington; and a few months later the same thing occurred with the French ambassador, Comte de Moustier, who when visiting Boston was not noticed by the governor, because the minister would not pay him the first visit. It may be that the governor was right here, but it was an idle piece of etiquette, which disgusted De Moustier with Boston — so much so that he dined nowhere, I think, except at my father's.

I remember another occasion on which Hancock showed an unkind feeling toward the general government, from an idea that it withheld from him that deference which his post of governor of a sovereign state entitled him to. He attached mighty importance to the station of chief magistrate of an independent state, forgetting that a portion of that lofty character was relinquished when Massachusetts became a component part of the Federal Union. His solicitude upon this subject brings to my mind four verses to the tune of "Yankee Doodle" often sung by the British officers during the Revolution:

"Madame Hancock dreamt a dream;
She dreamt she wanted something;
She dreamt she wanted a Yankee king,
To crown him with a pumpkin."

This official heartburning led him to neglect all those who had anything to do with the Federal government. Thus it was that a party of Indian chiefs and their squaws who were sent to Boston to see the town were totally unnoticed by him.

I happened to meet with those children of the woods on a journey from New York to Boston, and spent some time in the same tavern on the road. They travelled in two carriages under the care of Captain Prior of the army. A Mr. d'Hauteville, a Creole French planter, was with me, and we agreed to show some attention to these strangers when they arrived at Boston. Accordingly, we went to see them, and made arrangements to give them a dinner at our lodgings. Expecting that the governor would entertain them, we waited several days. He, however, took no notice of them, and on the appointed day they came to us. Mrs. Eaton's house, where we lodged, was spacious, and the courtyard was large and retired, and well suited to accommodate the crowd of spectators by which our red guests were followed. *Calamung coro ho* are the Indian words for "I drink your good health," and they were often repeated that day. After the cloth was removed I asked the chief for a toast. He rose with solemnity and addressed me as follows: "Brother, I divide my toast into three parts. First, I drink reverence to the Great Spirit, our Father in heaven; secondly, to our Great Father on earth, the President of the United States; and thirdly, to our travelling father

and friend, Captain Prior." All this was delivered with suitable emphasis and great gravity in the Indian language, and translated by the interpreter of the government, who dined with us. They stayed about three hours, and conducted themselves very well, retiring loaded with cigars and reasonably sober for Indians.

6. Fashions in Philadelphia

By Dolly Madison (1791)

And now, my dear Anna, we will have done with judges and juries, courts, both martial and partial, and we will speak a little about Philadelphia and the fashions, the beaux, Congress, and the weather. Do I not make a fine jumble of them? What would Harper or beau Dawson say were they to know it, ha, ha, — mind you laugh here with me. Philadelphia never was known to be so lively at this season as at present; for an accurate account of the amusements, I refer you to my letter to your sister Mary.

I went yesterday to see a doll, which has come from England, dressed to show us the fashions, and I saw besides a great quantity of millinery. Very long trains are worn, and they are festooned up with loops of bobbin and small covered buttons, the same as the dress; you are not confined to any number of festoons, but put them according to your fancy, and you cannot imagine what a beautiful effect it has. There is also a robe which is plaited very far back, open and ruffled down the sides, without a train, even with the petticoat. The hats are quite a different shape from what they used to be: they have

Bobbin = a kind of trimming.

no slope in the crown, scarce any rim, and are turned up at each side, and worn very much on the side of the head. Several of them are made of chipped wood, commonly known as cane hats; they are all lined: one that has come for Mrs. Bingham is lined with white, and trimmed with broad purple ribbon,



A GENTLEMAN OF THE REPUBLIC.

put round in large puffs, with a bow on the left side. The bonnets are all open on the top, through which the hair is passed, either up or down as you fancy, but latterly they wear it more up than down; it is quite out of fashion to frizz or curl the hair, as it is worn perfectly straight. Earrings, too, are very

fashionable. The waists are worn two inches longer than they used to be, and there is no such thing as long sleeves. They are worn half way above the elbow, either drawn or plaited in various ways, according to fancy; they do not wear ruffles at all, and as for elbows, Anna, ours would be alabaster, compared to some of the ladies who follow the fashion; black or a colored ribbon is pinned round the bare arm, between the elbow and the sleeve. Some new-fashioned slippers for ladies have come made of various colored kid or morocco, with small silver clasps sewed on; they are very handsome, and make the feet look remarkably small and neat. Everybody thinks the millinery last received the most tasty seen for a long time.

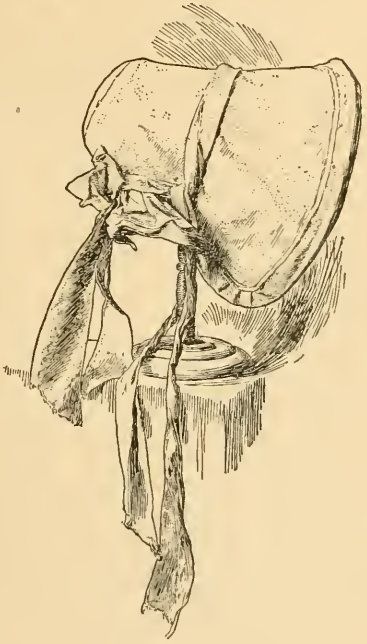
All our beaux are well; the amiable Chevalier is perfectly recovered, and handsomer than ever. You can have no idea, my dear girl, what pleasant times I have; there is the charming Chevalier, the divine Santana, the jolly Vicar, the witty and agreeable Fatio, the black-eyed Lord Henry, the soft, love-making Count, the giggling, foolish Duke, and sometimes the modest, good Meclare, who are at our house every day. We have fine riding parties and musical frolics.

7. A Bride in New York a Hundred Years ago

(1800)

My head is almost turned, and yet I am very happy. I am enraptured with New York. You cannot imagine anything half so beautiful as Broad-

way, and I am sure you would say I was more romantic than ever, if I should attempt to describe the Battery, — the fine water prospect, — you can have no idea how refreshing in a warm evening. The gardens we have not yet visited; indeed, we have so many delightful things to see 'twill take me forever. My husband declares he takes as much pleasure in showing them to me as I do in seeing them; you would believe it if you saw him.



A BRIDE'S BONNET.

I went shopping yesterday, and 'tis a fact that the little white satin Quaker bonnets, cap-crowns, lined with pink or blue or white, are the most fashionable that are worn. But I'll not have one, for if any of my old acquaintance should meet me in the street, they would laugh: I would if I were they.

I have been to two of the Columbia gardens, near the Battery, a most romantic place, it is enclosed in a circular form and has little rooms and boxes all around, with chairs and tables, these full of company; the trees are all hung with lamps, twinkling through the branches; in the centre is a pretty little building

with a fountain playing continually, and the rays of the lamps on the drops of water gave it a cool sparkling appearance that was delightful. This little building, which has a kind of canopy and pillars all around the garden, had festoons of colored lamps, that at a distance looked like large brilliant stars seen through the branches; and placed all around were marble busts, beautiful little figures of Diana, Cupid and Venus, which by the glimmering of the lamps, partly concealed by the foliage, give you an idea of enchantment.

As we strolled through the trees, we passed a box that Miss Watts was in. She called to us, and we went in, and had a charming refreshing glass of ice cream, which has chilled me ever since. They have a fine orchestra and have concerts here sometimes.

We went on toward the Battery. This is a large promenade by the shore of the North River: there are rows and clusters of trees in every part, and a large walk along the shore, almost over the water, gives you such a fresh delightful air, that every evening in summer it is crowded with company. Here, too, they have music playing in boats on the water of a moonlight night.

I am in raptures, as you may imagine, and if I had not grown sober before I came to this wonderful place, it would have turned my head.

8. Philadelphia Streets in 1802

By Dr. François André Michaud (1802)

I quitted New York on the 8th of June, 1802, for Philadelphia. The distance is one hundred miles. The stages perform this journey, some in one day, and some in a day and a half. The price is five piastres for each person. At the taverns where the stages stop, one piastre is paid for dinner, half a one for supper or breakfast, and the same for a bed. The whole of the interval which separates these two cities is cultivated, and the farms adjoin each other. Nine miles from New York is Newark, a very pretty little town, in New Jersey. The fields with which it is surrounded, are planted with apple trees: the cider made here is reckoned the best in the United States, but I think it greatly inferior to what is drank at Saint Loo, Coutances, or Bayeux. Among the other small towns met with on this road is Trenton. Its situation on the Delaware, and the beautiful country around it must render it a delightful retreat.

Piastre=dollar.

French towns.

Philadelphia is situated on the Delaware, one hundred and twenty miles from the sea. It is at present the largest, the handsomest, and the most populous city of the United States. There is not perhaps one on the old continent built on so regular a plan. Its streets, which intersect each other at right angles, are from forty-five to fifty feet wide, except that in the middle of the city which is twice that breadth. In it is built the market which is worthy of notice for its extent and the extreme neatness preserved in it. It is in the centre of the city, and occupies about one-

The present Broad Street.

third of its length. The streets are paved, and are provided with broad bricked footways. Pumps, placed on each side of them at about one hundred yards from each other, supply an abundance of water. Each of them has a lamp on its top. Several of the streets have Italian poplars of a very handsome appearance planted before the houses.

The population of Philadelphia is constantly increasing: in 1749, there were 11,000 inhabitants; in 1785, 40,000; and, at present, the number is estimated at 70,000. The few negroes found here are free, and are mostly employed as domestics. Provisions are a little cheaper at Philadelphia than at New York; the charge for boarding is, consequently, only from six to ten piastres a week. In Philadelphia we do not meet with any beggars, or any person bearing the stamp of misery in his countenance; this distressing sight, so common in the cities of Europe, is unknown in America; the love of and the necessity for work, the scarcity of hands, the high price of labour, an active commerce, just ideas — all these are causes which oppose the introduction of mendicity, either in the towns or in the country.

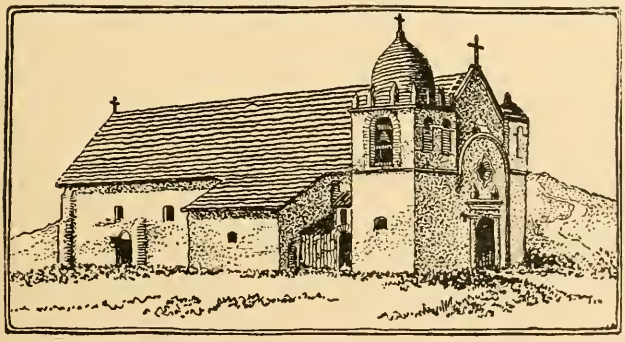
9. Society in Mexico

By Major Zebulon Pike (1806)

For hospitality, generosity, docility, and sobriety, the people of New Spain exceed any nation perhaps on the globe: but in national energy, or patriotism, enterprise of character, and independence of soul, they are perhaps the most deficient. Yet there are

men who have displayed bravery to a surprizing degree, and the Europeans who are there, cherish with delight the idea of their gallant ancestry. Their women have black eyes and hair, fine teeth, and are generally brunettes. I met but one exception to this rule at Chihuahua, a fair lady, and she by way of distinction was called the girl with light hair. Their dresses are generally short jackets and petticoats, and high-heel shoes, without any head dress: over this they have a silk wrapper which they always wear, and when in the presence of men affect to bring it over their faces; but as we approached the Atlantic and our frontiers, we saw several ladies who wore the gowns of our country women, which they conceive to be more elegant than their ancient costume.

The lower class of the men are generally dressed in broad-brimmed hats, short coats, large waistcoats and small clothes, always open at the knees, owing, I suppose, to the greater freedom it gives to the limbs on horseback, a kind of leather boot or wrapper bound round the leg, somewhat in the manner of our



A SPANISH MISSION CHURCH.

frontier men's leggins, and gartered on. The boot is of a soft pliable leather, but not coloured. In the eastern provinces the dragoons wear over this wrapper a sort of jack-boot made of seal leather, to which are fastened the spurs by a rivet, the gaffs of which are sometimes near an inch in length. But the spurs of the gentlemen and officers, although clumsy to our ideas, are frequently ornamented with raised silver work on the shoulders, and the strap embroidered with silver and gold thread.

Gaffs = the metal points on a spur.

They are always ready to mount their horses, on which the inhabitants of the internal provinces spend nearly half the day. This description will apply generally for the dress of all the men of the provinces for the lower class, but in the towns, amongst the more fashionable ranks, they dress after the European or United States mode, with not more distinction than we see in our cities from one six months to another. Both men and women have remarkably fine hair, and pride themselves in the display of it.

Their amusements are music, singing, dancing, and gambling; the latter is strictly prohibited, but the prohibition is not much attended to. The dance is performed by one man and two women, who beat time to the music, which is soft, but sometimes changes to a lively gay air. The fandango is danced in various figures and numbers. The minuet is still danced by the superior class only; the music made use of is the guitar and violin, and singers accompany the music with their hands and voices.

Their games are cards, billiards, horse-racing, and cock-fighting, the first and last of which are carried to the most extravagant lengths, the parties losing and winning immense sums. The present Comman-

dant-General is very severe with his officers in these respects, frequently sending them to some frontier post, in confinement for months, for no other fault than having lost large sums at play.

At every town of consequence is a public walk, where the ladies and gentlemen meet and sing songs, which are always on the subject of love, or the social board. The ladies have fine voices, and sing in French, Italian, and Spanish, the whole company joining in the chorus. In their houses the ladies play on the guitar, and generally accompany it with their voices. They either sit down on the carpet cross-legged, or loll on a sofa. To sit upright in a chair appeared to put them to great inconvenience, and although the better class would sometimes do it on our first introduction, they soon demanded liberty to follow their old habits.

In their eating and drinking they are remarkably temperate. Early in the morning you receive a dish of chocolate and a cake; at twelve you dine on several dishes of meat, fowls, and fish; after which you have a variety of confectionary, and indeed an elegant dessert: then drink a few glasses of wine, sing a few songs, and retire to take the siesta, or afternoon nap, which is done by rich and poor; and about two o'clock the windows and doors are all closed, the streets deserted, and the stillness of midnight reigns throughout. About four o'clock they rise, wash, and dress, and prepare for the dissipation of the night. About eleven o'clock some refreshments are offered, but few take any, except a little wine and water and a little candied sugar.

The beggars of the City of Mexico alone are estimated at sixty thousand souls; what must be the

number through the whole kingdom? And to what reason can it be owing, that, in a country superior to any in the world for riches in gold and silver, producing all the necessaries of life, and most of its luxuries, there should be such a vast proportion of the inhabitants in want of bread and clothing? It can only be accounted for by the tyranny of the government, and the luxuries of the rich: the government striving by all the local restrictions possible to be invented, without absolutely driving the people to desperation, to keep Spanish America dependent on Europe.

10. Anecdotes of Daniel Webster

By Josiah Quincy (1826)

On Friday, February 17, 1820, I find an account of a dinner at Mr. Webster's. The occasion was absolutely informal and very pleasant. Webster carved the beef and was in a charming humor. He told some good lawyer's stories, and gave us a graphic account of the burning of his house in Portsmouth, in the winter of 1813. "Though I was in Washington at the time," he said, "I believe I know more about the fire than many who were actively at work on the spot. Besides, here is Mrs. Webster, who was burned out. She will correct me if I am wrong." He told us that all he possessed in the world was lost, there being no insurance upon house or furniture; but as more than two hundred buildings were consumed in the fire, some of them belonging to those less able to make a living than himself, he felt he had no right to murmur. He was, nevertheless, troubled

about the loss of his library. His books were full of notes and associations, and could not be replaced.

The sweet and playful manner of Webster is fixed indelibly upon my memory. That manner I cannot give, and it was everything. He was on the happiest terms with the world, which had crowned him with its choicest blessing, and stood forth in all respects as an example and a hero among men.

The conversation was running upon the importance of doing small things thoroughly and with the full measure of one's ability. This Webster illustrated by an account of some petty insurance case that was brought to him when a young lawyer in Portsmouth. Only a small amount was involved, and a twenty-dollar fee was all that was promised. He saw that, to do his clients full justice, a journey to Boston, to consult the Law Library, would be desirable. He would be out of pocket by such an expedition, and for his time he would receive no adequate compensation. After a little hesitation, he determined to do his very best, cost what it might. He accordingly went to Boston, looked up the authorities, and gained the case. Years after this, Webster, then famous, was passing through New York. An important insurance case was to be tried the day after his arrival, and one of the counsel had been suddenly taken ill. Money was no object, and Webster was begged to name his terms and conduct the case. "I told them," said Mr. Webster, "that it was preposterous to expect me to prepare a legal argument at a few hours' notice. They insisted, however, that I should look at the papers; and this, after some demur, I consented to do. Well, it was my old twenty-dollar case over again, and, as I never forget

anything, I had all the authorities at my fingers' ends. The court knew that I had no time to prepare, and were astonished at the range of my acquirements. So, you see, I was handsomely paid both in fame and money for that journey to Boston; and the moral is, that good work is rewarded in the end, though, to be sure, one's own self-approval should be enough."

I may be pardoned for taking from my journal of later date another after-dinner story which I heard Mr. Webster tell with great dramatic effect. One of the party mentioned that a president of one of the Boston banks had that morning redeemed a counterfeit bill for fifty dollars, never doubting that his signature upon it was genuine. This incident led to a discussion of the value of expert testimony in regard to writing, the majority of our company holding it in little esteem. Mr. Webster then came to the defence of this sort of testimony, saying that he had found it of much value, although experts were like children who saw more than they were able to explain to others. "And this reminds me," he said, "of my story of the tailor. It was a capital case that was being tried, and the tailor's testimony was very important. He had been called to prove that he made a certain coat for the criminal; and he swore to the fact stoutly. Upon cross-examination he was asked how he knew that the coat was his work. 'Why, I know it by my stitches, of course.' 'Are your stitches longer than those of other tailors?' 'Oh, no!' 'Well, then, are they shorter?' 'Not a bit shorter.' 'Anything peculiar about them?' 'Well, I don't believe there is.' 'Then how do you dare to come here and swear that they are yours?' This

seemed to be a poser, but the witness met it triumphantly. Casting a look of contempt upon his examiner, the tailor raised both hands to heaven and exclaimed, 'Good Lord! as if I didn't know my own stitches!' The jury believed him, and they were right in doing so. The fact is, we continually build our judgment upon details too fine for distinct cognizance. And these nice shades of sensibility are trustworthy, although we can give no good account of them. We can swear to our stitches, notwithstanding they seem to be neither longer nor shorter than those of other people."

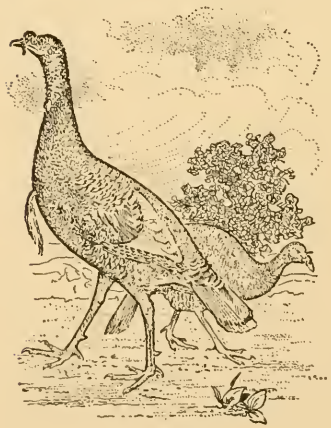
11. A Kentucky Marksman

By Josiah Quincy (1826)

I knew Larz Anderson, of Cincinnati, well in college, and remember when he arrived in Cambridge, a small, flaxen-haired boy, accompanied by two companions from the distant West. They had come all the way from Kentucky on horseback, their effects being borne in saddle-bags behind the riders. There was no public conveyance, the roads were execrable, and this manly mode of travelling was then the only way of getting to Harvard.

Oxford Street, in Cambridge, is at present a very decorous thoroughfare, not at all adapted to the wild sport of turkey-shooting, for which purpose the ground it occupies was used when I was in college. We stood with our backs to the site of Memorial Hall, and discharged rifles, at long range, at a turkey which was dimly discernible in the distance. A small

fee was demanded for the privilege of shooting, and the turkey was to be given to any one who could hit it. But, except for some chance shot, like that made by Mr. Tupman when out rook-shooting, it was safe to predict that nobody would hit it. The usual end of a Harvard turkey-shooting was the departure of the proprieter of the turkeys with all his birds and all our sixpences. Still there was the excitement of a lottery about it, if nothing else. The ball, if discharged, must strike somewhere; and, if so, why might it not happen to strike the turkey? The logic was simply irresistible. A fowl of that size would be a most desirable addition to the meagre fare furnished by the college commons; and so the rifles cracked, with small result to the students and splendid profits to the turkey-man. One day a little tow-headed fellow appeared on the field, and desired to take part in the sport. Though he seemed almost too young to be trusted with a rifle, the master of the fowls (foreseeing future gains) was quite willing he should try. He must first receive proper instructions about the holding and pointing of his piece, and then there would really be no danger. Young Larz received the directions with great good nature, raised the rifle, and down went the turkey. The man stared in amazement, and then broke



A WILD TURKEY.

into a smile. "Try it again, young one," said he. "'Most any one can throw sixes once, you know." Another bird was procured, the ball flew to the mark with the same result, and a second turkey was added to the banquet upon which his friends would regale. "Well, where in"—the United States, let us call it—"did you come from?" exclaimed the master of fowls, who began to realize that his occupation was gone.

"I came from the State of Kentucky, sir," answered Larz Anderson, proudly; "and next time you meet a gentleman from that State, just remember there's not much you can tell him about a rifle. That's all."

12. The Little Boy that ran away from Providence

By Lydia Maria Child (1842)

Doctor Hawkins of Boston, coming home to dine one day found a very bright-looking handsome mulatto on the steps, apparently about seven or eight years old. As he opened the door, the boy glided in, as if it were his home. "What do you want?" said the doctor. The child looked up with smiling confidence, and answered, "I am a little boy that ran away from Providence; and I want some dinner; and I thought maybe you would give me some." His radiant face, and child-like freedom worked like a charm. He had a good dinner, and remained several days, becoming more and more the pet of the whole household. He said he had been cruelly treated by

somebody in Providence, and had run away; but the people he described could not be found. The doctor thought it would not do to have him growing up in idleness, and he tried to find a place where he could run of errands, clean knives, &c. for his living. An hour after this was mentioned, the boy was missing. In a few weeks, they heard of him in the opposite part of the city, sitting on a door-step at dinner-time. When the door opened, he walked in, smiling, and said, "I am a little boy that ran away from Providence; and I want some dinner, and I thought maybe you would give me some." He was not mistaken this time either. The heart that trusted so completely received a cordial welcome. After a time, it was again proposed to find some place at service; and straightway this human butterfly was off, no one knew whither.

For several months no more was heard of him. But one bright winter day, his first benefactor found him seated on the steps of a house in Beacon-street. "Why, Tom, where did you come from?" said he. "I came from Philadelphia." "How upon earth did you get here?" "I heard folks talk about New-York, and I thought I should like to see it. So I went on board a steamboat; and when it put off, the captain asked me who I was; and I told him that I was a little boy that ran away from Providence, and I wanted to go to New-York, but I hadn't any money. 'You little rascal,' says he, 'I'll throw you overboard.' 'I don't believe you will,' said I; and he didn't. I told him I was hungry, and he gave me something to eat, and made up a nice little bed for me. When I got to New-York, I went and sat down on a door-step; and when the gentleman came home to dinner, I

went in, and told him that I was a little boy that ran away from Providence, and I was hungry. So they gave me something to eat, and made up a nice little bed for me, and let me stay there. But I wanted to see Philadelphia; so I went into a steam-boat; and when they asked me who I was, I told them that I was a little boy that ran away from Providence. They said I had no business there, but they gave me an orange. When I got to Philadelphia, I sat down on a door-step, and when the gentleman came home to dinner, I told him I was a little boy that ran away from Providence, and I thought perhaps he would give me something to eat. So they gave me a good dinner, and made me up a nice little bed. Then I wanted to come back to Boston; and every body gave me something to eat, and made me up a nice little bed. And I sat down on this door-step, and when the lady asked me what I wanted, I told her I was a little boy that ran away from Providence, and I was hungry. So she gave me something to eat, and made me up a nice little bed; and I stay here, and do her errands sometimes. Every body is very good to me, and I like every body."

He looked up with the most sunny gaiety, and striking his hoop as he spoke, went down the street like an arrow. He disappeared soon after, probably in quest of new adventures. I have never heard of him since: and sometimes a painful fear passes through my mind that the kidnappers, prowling about all our large towns, have carried him into slavery.

13. New Years Day in New York

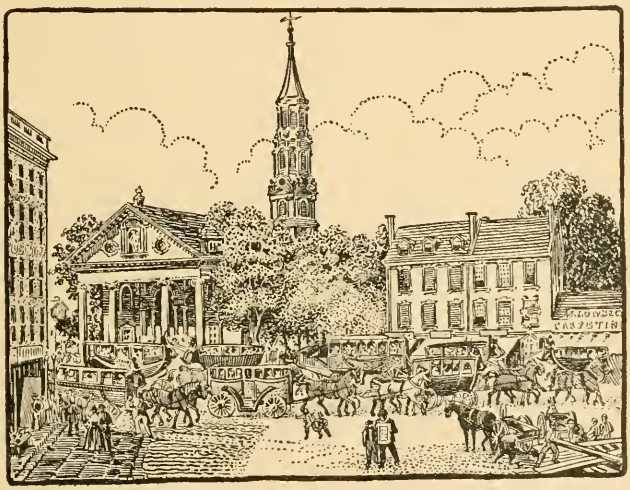
By Lydia Maria Child (1842)

New York welcomes the new year, in much the same style that she does every thing else. She is not prone, as the Quakers say, "to get into the stillness," to express any of her emotions. Such a hubbub as was kept up on the night of the 31st, I never heard. Such a firing out of the old year, and such a firing in of the new! Fourth of July in Boston is nothing compared to it. The continual discharge of guns and pistols prevented my reading or writing in peace, and I took refuge in bed; but every five minutes a lurid flash darted across the walls, followed by the hateful crash of fire-arms. If any good thing is expressed by that sharp voice, it lies beyond the power of my imagination to discover it; why men should choose it for the utterance of joy, is more than I can tell.

The racket of these powder-devilkins kept me awake till two o'clock. At five, I was roused by a stout Hibernian voice, almost under my window, shouting "Pa-ther! Pa-ther!" Peter did not answer, and off went a pistol. Upon this, Peter was fain to put his head out of the window, and inquire what was wanted. "A bright New Year to ye, Pa-ther. Get up and open the door."

The show in the shop-windows, during the week between Christmas and New Year's, was splendid, I assure you. All that Parisian taste, or English skill could furnish, was spread out to tempt the eye. How I did want the wealth of Rothschild, that I might make all the world a present, and then, methinks, I

could still long for another world to endow. The happiness of Heaven must consist in loving and giving. What else is there worth living for? I have often involuntarily applied to myself a remark made by Madam Roland. "Reflecting upon what part I was fitted to perform in the world," says she, "I could never think of any that quite satisfied me, but that of Divine Providence." To some this may sound



NEW YORK IN 1820.

blasphemous; it was however merely the spontaneous and child-like utterance of a loving and liberal soul.

In New York, they observe this festival after the old Dutch fashion; and the Dutch, you know, were famous lovers of good eating. No lady, that is a lady, will be out on the streets on the first of January. Every woman, that is "anybody," stays at

home, dressed in her best, and by her side is a table covered with cakes, preserves, wines, oysters, hot coffee, &c.; and as every gentleman is in honour bound to call on every lady, whose acquaintance he does not intend to cut, the amount of eating and drinking done by some fashionable beaux must of course be very considerable. The number of calls is a matter of pride and boasting among ladies, and there is, of course, considerable rivalry in the magnificence and variety of the eating tables. This custom is eminently Dutch in its character, and will pass away before a higher civilization.

To furnish forth this treat, the shops vied with each other to the utmost. Confectionery abounded in the shape of every living thing; beside many things nowhere to be found, not even among gnomes, or fairies, or uncouth merrows of the sea. Cakes were of every conceivable shape — pyramids, obelisks, towers, pagodas, castles, &c. Some frosted loaves nestled lovingly in a pretty basket of sugar eggs; others were garlanded with flowers, or surmounted by cooing doves, or dancing cupids. Altogether, they made a pretty show in Broadway — too pretty — since the object was to minister to heartless vanity, or tempt a sated appetite.

Merrows = mermaids.

There is one lovely feature in this annual festival. It is a season when all past neglect, all family feuds, all heart-burning and estrangement among friends may be forgotten and laid aside for ever. They who have not spoken for years may renew acquaintance, without any unpleasant questions asked, if they signify a wish to do so by calling on the first of January.

14. House-cleaning

By Francis Hopkinson (1785)

When a young couple are about to enter on the matrimonial state, a never failing article in the marriage treaty is, that the lady shall have and enjoy the free and unmolested exercise of the rights of white-washing, with all its ceremonials, privileges, and appurtenances. You will wonder what this privilege of white-washing is. I will endeavour to give you an idea of the ceremony, as I have seen it performed.

There is no season of the year in which the lady may not, if she pleases, claim her privilege; but the latter end of May is generally fixed upon for the purpose. The attentive husband may judge by certain prognostics, when the storm is nigh at hand. If the lady grows uncommonly fretful, finds fault with the servants, is discontented with the children, and complains much of the nastiness of everything about her: these are symptoms which ought not to be neglected, yet they sometimes go off without any further effect. But if, when the husband rises in the morning, he should observe in the yard, a wheelbarrow, with a quantity of lime in it, or should see certain buckets filled with a solution of lime in water, there is no time for hesitation. He immediately locks up the apartment or closet where his papers, and private property are kept, and putting the key in his pocket, betakes himself to flight. A husband, however beloved, becomes a perfect nuisance during this season of feminine rage. His authority is superseded, his commission suspended, and the very scullion who

cleans the brasses in the kitchen becomes of more importance than him. He has nothing for it but to abdicate, for a time, and run from an evil which he can neither prevent nor modify.

The husband gone, the ceremony begins. The walls are stripped of their furniture — paintings, prints, and looking-glasses lie in huddled heaps about the floors: the curtains are torn from their testers, the beds crammed into windows, chairs and tables, bedsteads and cradles crowd the yard; and the garden fence bends beneath the weight of carpets, blankets, cloth cloaks, old coats, under-petticoats, and ragged breeches.

This ceremony completed, and the house thoroughly evacuated, the next operation is to smear the walls and ceilings with brushes, dipped in a solution of lime called white-wash; to pour buckets of water over every floor, and scratch all the partitions and wainscoats with hard brushes, charged with soft soap and stone-cutter's sand.

Pent-house = a shed or sloping roof projecting from the main wall or building.

The windows by no means escape the general deluge. A servant scrambles out upon the pent-house, at the risk of her neck, and with a mug in her hand, and a bucket within reach, dashes innumerable gallons of water against the glass panes, to the great annoyance of passengers in the street.

I have been told that an action at law was once brought against one of these water nymphs, by a person who had a new suit of clothes spoiled by this operation: but after long argument it was determined, that no damages could be awarded; inasmuch as the defendant was in the exercise of a legal right, and not answerable for the consequences. And so the poor gentleman was doubly non-suited;

for he lost both his suit of clothes and his suit at law.

These smearings and scratchings, these washings and dashings, being duly performed, the next ceremonial is to cleanse and replace the distracted furniture. You may have seen a house-raising, or a ship-launch — recollect, if you can, the hurry, bustle, confusion, and noise of such a scene, and you will have some idea of this cleansing match. The misfortune is, that the sole object is to make things clean. It matters not how many useful, ornamental, or valuable articles suffer mutilation or death under the operation. A mahogany chair and a carved frame undergo the same discipline: they are to be made clean at all events; but their preservation is not worthy of attention. For instance: a fine large engraving is laid flat upon the floor; a number of smaller prints are piled upon it, until the superincumbent weight cracks the lower glass — but this is of no importance. A valuable picture is placed leaning against the sharp corner of a table; others are made to lean against that, till the pressure of the whole forces the corner of the table through the canvas of the first. The frame and glass of a fine print are to be cleaned; the spirit and oil used on this occasion are suffered to leak through and deface the engraving — no matter! If the glass is clean and the frame shines it is sufficient — the rest is not worthy of consideration. An able arithmetician hath made a calculation, founded on long experience, and proved that the losses and destruction incident to two white-washings are equal to one removal and three removals equal to one fire.

This cleansing frolic over, matters begin to resume

their pristine appearance; the storm abates, and all would be well again: but it is impossible that so great a convulsion in so small a community should pass over without producing some consequences. For two or three weeks after the operation, the family are usually afflicted with sore eyes, sore throats, or severe colds, occasioned by exhalations from wet floors and damp walls.



A QUILTING BEE.

PART II

IN THE COUNTRY

15. A Visit to Mount Vernon

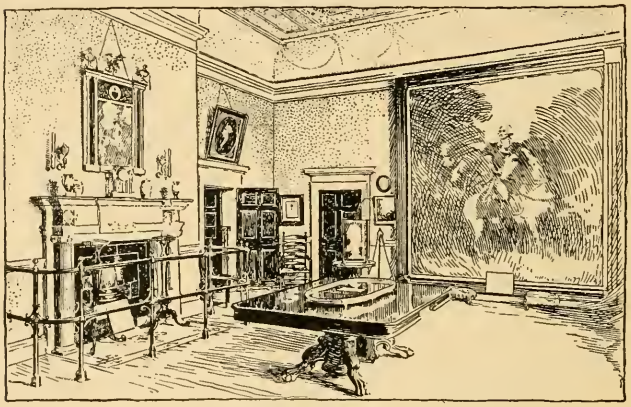
By Brissot de Warville (1788)

I hastened to arrive at Mount Vernon, the seat of General Washington, ten miles below Alexandria on the same river. On this route you traverse a considerable wood, and after having passed over two hills, you discover a country house of an elegant and majestic simplicity. It is preceded by grass plats; on one side of the avenue are the stables, on the other a green-house, and houses for a number of negro mechanics. In a spacious back yard are turkies, geese, and other poultry. This house overlooks the Potowmack, enjoys an extensive prospect, has a vast and elevated portico on the front next the river, and a convenient distribution of the apartments within.

The General came home in the evening, fatigued with having been to lay out a new road in some part of his plantations. You have often heard him compared to Cincinnatus; the comparison is doubtless just. This celebrated General is nothing more at present than a good farmer, constantly occupied in the care of his farm and the improvement of culti-

The Roman Dictator who gave up his power to return to his farm.

vation. He has lately built a barn, one hundred feet in length and considerably more in breadth, destined to receive the productions of his farm, and to shelter his cattle, horses, asses, and mules. It is built on a plan sent him by that famous English farmer, Arthur Young. But the General has much improved the plan.



THE BANQUET HALL AT MOUNT VERNON.

This building is in brick, it cost but three hundred pounds; I am sure in France it would have cost three thousand. He planted this year eleven hundred bushels of potatoes. All this is new in Virginia, where they know not the use of barns, and where they lay up no provisions for their cattle. His three hundred negroes are distributed in different log houses, in different parts of his plantation, which in this neighbourhood consists of ten thousand acres. Colonel Humphreys, that poet of whom I have spoken, assured me that the General possesses, in

different parts of the country, more than two hundred thousand acres.

Washington was one of the most far-sighted business men of his time.

Every thing has an air of simplicity in his house; his table is good, but not ostentatious; and no deviation is seen from regularity and domestic economy. Mrs. Washington superintends the whole, and joins to the qualities of an excellent house-wife, that simple dignity which ought to characterize a woman, whose husband has acted the greatest part on the theatre of human affairs; while she possesses that amenity, and manifests that attention to strangers, which render hospitality so charming. The same virtues are conspicuous in her interesting niece; but unhappily she appears not to enjoy good health.

A French officer. For the account of Washington see Volume II of these readers.

M. de Chastellux has mingled too much of the brilliant in his portrait of General Washington. His eye bespeaks great goodness of heart, manly sense marks all his answers, and he sometimes animates in conversation, but he has no characteristic features; which renders it difficult to seize him. He announces a profound discretion, and a great diffidence in himself; but at the same time, an unshakable firmness of character, when once he has made his decision. His modesty is astonishing to a Frenchman; he speaks of the American war, and of his victories, as of things in which he had no direction.

16. From Poverty to Prosperity

By Brissot de Warville (1788)

He who begins a settlement in the woods, is generally a man who has lost his fortune and his credit in the cultivated part of the state. He emigrates in

the month of April. His first work is to build a little cabin for himself and family; the roof is of rough hewn wood, the floor of earth. It is lighted by the door, or sometimes by a little window with oiled paper. A more wretched building adjoining it gives shelter to a cow and two miserable horses. This done, he attacks the trees that surround his cabin. To extirpate them by the root, would require too much labour. He contents himself by cutting them at two or three feet from the ground. The space thus cleared is then plowed, and planted with Indian corn. The soil, being new, requires little culture; in the month of October it yields a harvest of forty or fifty bushels the acre. Even from the month of September, this corn furnishes a plentiful and agreeable nourishment to his family.

Hunting and fishing, with a little grain, suffice, during the winter, for the subsistence of his family; while the cow and horses of our planter feed on the poor wild grass, or the buds of trees. During the first year, he suffers much from cold and hunger; but he endures it without repining. Being near the savages, he adopts their manners; his fatigue is violent, but it is suspended by long intervals of repose: his pleasures consist in fishing and hunting; he eats, drinks, and sleeps in the filth of his little cabin.

Thus roll away the first three years of our planter in laziness, independence, the variation of pleasure, and of labour. But population increases in his neighbourhood, and then his troubles begin. His cattle could before run at large; but now his neighbours force him to retain them within his little farm. Formerly the wild beasts gave subsistence to his family; they now fly a country which begins to be

peopled by men, and consequently by enemies. An increasing society brings regulations, taxes, and the parade of laws; and nothing is so terrible to our independent planter as all these shackles. He will not consent to sacrifice a single natural right for all the benefits of government; he abandons then his little establishment, and goes to seek a second retreat in the wilderness, where he can recommence his labours, and prepare a farm for cultivation. Such are the charms of independence, that many men have begun the clearing of farms four times in different parts of this State.

The labour bestowed by the first planter gives some value to the farm, which now comes to be occupied by a man of the second class of planters. He begins by adding to his cabin a house. A saw-mill in the neighbouring settlement, furnishes him with boards. His house is covered with shingles, and is two stories high. He makes a little meadow, plants an orchard of two of three hundred apple-trees. His stable is enlarged; he builds a spacious barn of wood, and covers it with rye-straw. Instead of planting only Indian corn, he cultivates wheat and rye; the last is destined to make whisky. But the planter manages ill; his fields are badly plowed, never manured, and give but small crops. His cattle break through his fences, destroy his crops, and often cut off the hopes of the year. His horses are ill fed, and feeble; his cattle often die with hunger in the spring; his house and his farm give equal proofs of the want of industry; the glass of his windows has given place to old hats and rags. This man is fond of company; he drinks to excess; passes much of his time in disputing about politics. Thus he contracts debts, and

is forced, after some years, to sell his plantation to a planter of the third and last class.

This is ordinarily a man of property, and of a cultivated mind. His first object is to convert into meadow all his land, on which he can conduct water. He then builds a barn of stone, sometimes a hundred feet in length, and forty in breadth. This defends his cattle from cold, and they eat less when kept warm, than when exposed to the frost. To spare the consumption of fuel, he makes use of economical stoves, and by this he saves immense labour in cutting and carting wood. He multiplies the objects of culture; besides corn, wheat, and rye, he cultivates oats and buckwheat. Near his house he forms a garden of one or two acres, which gives him quantities of cabbage, potatoes, and turnips. Near the spring which furnishes him with water, he builds a dairy-house. He increases the number, and improves the quality of his fruit-trees. His sons are always at work by his side; his wife and daughter quit their wheels for the labours of the harvest. The last object of industry is to build a house for his own use. This building is generally of stone; it is vast, well distributed, and well furnished. His horses and cattle, by their good appearance, their strength, and fecundity, prove that they are well fed, and well attended. His table abounds with delicate and various dishes. His kitchen flows with milk and honey. His wife and daughters manufacture their clothing. In proportion as he grows rich, he perceives the value of the protection of the laws; he pays his taxes with punctuality; he contributes to the support of churches and schools, as the only means of insuring order and tranquillity.

17. Those Fair Connecticut Girls

By Brissot de Warville (1778)

Connecticut appears like one continuous town. On quitting Hartford, you enter Wethersfield, a town not less elegant, very long, consisting of houses well built. They tell me it gave birth to the famous Silas Deane, one of the first promoters of the American revolution, who from a schoolmaster in this town, was elevated to the rank of an envoy from Congress to Europe.

Wethersfield is remarkable for its vast fields uniformly covered with onions, of which great quantities are exported to the West-Indies. It is likewise remarkable for its elegant meeting-house, or church. On Sunday it is said to offer an enchanting spectacle, by the number of young handsome persons who assemble there, and by the agreeable music with which they intermingle the divine service.

New Haven yields not to Wethersfield for the beauty of the fair sex. At their balls during the winter, it is not rare to see an hundred charming girls, adorned with those brilliant complexions seldom met with in journeying to the South, and dressed in elegant simplicity. The beauty of complexion is as striking in Connecticut, as its numerous population. You will not go into a tavern without meeting with neatness, decency, and dignity. The tables are served by a young girl, decent and pretty; by an amiable mother, whose age has not effaced the agreeableness of her features; by men who have that air of dignity which the idea of equality inspires; and who are not ignoble and base, like the greatest part of our tavern-keepers. On the road you often meet those fair Connecticut

girls, either driving a carriage, or alone on horse-back, galloping boldly; with an elegant hat on the head, a white apron, and a calico gown; — usages which prove at once the early cultivation of their reason, since they are trusted so young to themselves, the safety of the road, and the general innocence of manners. You will see them hazarding themselves alone, without protectors, in the public stages — I am wrong to say hazarding; who can offend them? They are here under the protection of public morals, and of their own innocence: it is the consciousness of this innocence, which renders them so complaisant, and so good; for a stranger takes them by the hand, and laughs with them, and they are not offended at it.

18. Mary will Smile

By William Clifton (1795)

The morn was fresh, and pure the gale,
When Mary, from her cot a rover,
Pluck'd many a wild rose of the vale
To bind the temples of her lover.
As near his little farm she stray'd,
Where birds of love were ever pairing,
She saw her William in the shade,
The arms of ruthless war preparing.
"Though now," he cried, "I seek the hostile plain,
Mary shall smile, and all be fair again."

She seized his hand, and "Ah!" she cried,
"Wilt thou to camps and war a stranger
Desert thy Mary's faithful side,
And bare thy life to every danger?

Yet go, brave youth! to arms away!
My maiden hands for fight shall dress thee,
And when the drum beats far away,
I'll drop a silent tear and bless thee.
Return'd with honor, from the hostile plain,
Mary will smile, and all be fair again.

The bugles through the forest wind,
The woodland soldiers call to battle,
Be some protecting angel kind,
And guard thy life when cannons rattle!"
She sung, and as the rose appears
In sunshine, when the storm is over,
A smile beam'd sweetly through her tears,
The blush of promise to her lover.
Return'd in triumph from the hostile plain,
All shall be fair, and Mary smile again.

19. The Shaking Quakers

By Moses Guest (1796)

Sunday, October 10. Having heard various accounts of the very singular mode of worship practised by the people called Shaking Quakers, I this day went to visit them. I found the house at which they were assembled, situated nine miles northwest of Albany, and two miles from the Mohawk river; it is built of logs, neatly squared, and is fifty feet in length, and twenty-four in width, with a chimney at each end. When I entered this building, I beheld twenty-four men dancing at one end of the

The Shaking Quakers or Shakers live in communities, the men and women in separate large houses. They have been very industrious and well-to-do, but at present few

young people join them, and the sect is dying out.

room, and twenty women at the other. They appeared to be from the age of fourteen to eighty years; and were formed four deep. Two of their elders were singing a song tune, called the rose tree. They kept good time, though they frequently trembled as if much convulsed — this they call the working of the spirit.

After continuing in this way for about an hour and a half, the elders stopped singing; this stopped the dancing for the present. The men then put on their coats, and they all retired to a house, but a short distance from that in which they had been dancing; where they partook of some refreshment; but soon commenced singing a kind of gibberish, which they call an unknown tongue. They say they can speak several different languages, and though the living cannot understand them, they are intelligible to the departed spirits, with whom they say they hold frequent converse.

After about an hour's intermission they assembled again, and formed two deep; they then all sang in their unknown tongue, appearing, at times, to be very much convulsed. They continued dancing and trembling half an hour; then ceased singing, and after many heavy sighs and groans, and much twisting and trembling, one of their elders, in broken accents, muttered out, "Let us, my dear friends, endeavour to praise God in the dance; prepare yourselves." The men then put off their coats and waistcoats; then after opening their collars, and tying up their sleeves, they formed four deep, the women also forming in the same manner. One of their elders then, after groaning and trembling for a few minutes, said, "My dear friends, you that are blest with the gift of

songs, I hope will praise God by singing a few tunes for us." Immediately two young men stepped out from the ranks, and began to sing, at which time they all commenced dancing.

In this way they continued about an hour, appearing, at times, very much agitated. They then all stopped dancing, and one of their elders, after violently shaking his head and arms, thus addressed them — "My dear friends, I hope you will endeavor to walk worthy of the vocation wherewith you are called; and praise God for separating you from the wicked world; for in like manner as Lot escaped out of Sodom, so have you, my friends, escaped, and have been separated from the wicked world." He was soon seized with a very violent shaking of the head, after which, with a heavy sigh and groan, he told his trembling audience that they might put on their garments and retire, which they soon did.

They say that all the churches in the world, except themselves, are antichristian. They also say they are commissioned to judge the world; that the books are now open; and that the souls of all those persons who have died are daily appearing before them and that all who have died in an imperfect state have gone to a place of torment, there to pay the debt due to divine justice, by suffering in proportion to their sins; and that after passing through several degrees of punishment, and paying the whole debt, they then appear before them, are acquitted, and sent to heaven. If any man comes to them for instruction, whose hair is long, they read to such person the 11th chapter of 1st Corinthians, 14th verse; they then inform him, if he wishes to be instructed, he must have his hair cut short, as he wears the mark of the beast.

20. Home, Sweet Home!

By John Howard Payne (1823)

'Mid pleasures and palaces though we may roam,
Be it ever so humble, there's no place like home;
A charm from the sky seems to hallow us there,
Which, seek through the world, is ne'er met with elsewhere.

Home, Home, Sweet, Sweet Home!
There's no place like Home!
There's no place like Home!

An exile from home, splendor dazzles in vain,
O, give me my lowly thatched cottage again!
The birds singing gayly, that came at my call —
Give me them, — and the peace of mind, dearer than all!

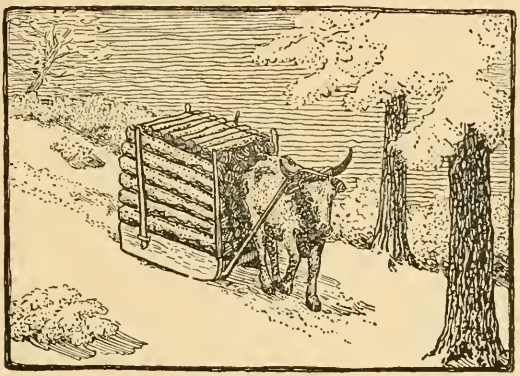
Home, Home, Sweet, Sweet Home!
There's no place like Home!
There's no place like Home!

21. Incidents in the Life of a Bound Boy

By Asa G. Sheldon (1797)

On April 14th, 1797, while I was still in my ninth year, Mr. Daniel Parker came to my father's house to get a boy to live with him. Mother said he might take his choice, Samuel or Asa. "I will take Asa," he said, "because he is the youngest." Accordingly, my father went over with me to the Parker place.

I found the family to consist of Mr. Parker, who was about forty years of age, and wife, of nearly the same age; David, about eighteen and two daughters, Patty and Sally, who were a few years younger.



AN OX CART.

Mrs. Parker told me to call her "mother," and certainly she acted the part of a mother to me. She fed me when hungry; dried my clothes when wet; cared for my every want; and when troubles assailed that she could not alleviate, she pitied and sympathised with me. In short, she was as kind as my own mother.

On first entering the house, I found no one at home except Mrs. Parker and her two daughters. After sitting a few minutes, she said, "You may go to the barn and see the calves." There were six of them, and I employed the forenoon in cleaning the stalls and clearing up. After dinner I went with Mr. Parker to split oak butts into wheel spokes. Thus ended my first day's servitude.

Our spring ploughing that year was done by four oxen and a horse, and it was my constant business to drive them. In hoeing, the plan was for me to take every alternate hill and follow back on the same row, thus keeping alongside the men. The summer passed pleasantly away. I had the privilege of attending winter school, and as is common for youth, formed a lasting attachment to a schoolmate — Daniel Putman, a boy nearly my size and age.

He would thus do half a man's work.

My father needed a cow; he agreed with Mr. Parker to take one for twenty-two dollars, and I was to work for him another year, or till the next May, to pay for her, and I was to have winter schooling. Mr. Parker was so miserly, that he was unwilling to let me slide on the ice, because it wore my shoes out; but thanks to Mother Parker's good will, I found frequent opportunities to enjoy an hour on the ponds.

At the commencement of my third year, Mr. Parker frequently urged that I should be bound to him, telling my father that he would give him twenty dollars in cash, and would give me one hundred dollars on becoming twenty-one. To this my father agreed, and the necessary documents were signed without mother's knowledge. Great was her anguish on learning that her son was a "bond slave," as she was pleased to call it.

In my fourth year of service, there was no snow for sledding till February or March, when a nice fall of snow coming, created an ambition in me to drive a load of wood to Salem town and sell it. When at Salem a baker agreed with me for a load of faggots, or twigs bound in bundles, for heating ovens. With the hope that Mr. Parker would give me all the money if I could contrive to make them without tak-

ing his time, I kept my hatchet in the cow pasture, and when I found the cows handily I could make eight or ten bundles, and then run and catch up with them. If I did not find them readily, I made less, and so on.

I drove the load to Salem, and brought home five dollars and eighty cents and gave it to Mr. Parker, and he was niggardly enough to offer me twelve and a half cents for all my labor, hurry and toil. Mother Parker seeing me about to take it, gave a stamp with her foot, when the ninepence dropped on the floor, and I hastened out of the house. Soon after, Mother Parker went to Salem herself and brought home a nice hat for me, that cost three dollars. There was but one other hat worn in town that was so nice. On presenting it she said, "There Asa, that will do you more good than ninepence."

The "New England Shilling" was 16⅔ cents, and the "ninepence" was 12½ cents.

Once in April, when the snow was falling fast, Mr. Parker came to me and said, "If you will leave vine stripping and go and get the sheep up, I will pay you for it." I did, and found a wee little lamb in the snow. Taking off my frock I wrapped it up and brought it home. "Now, Asa," said Mr. Parker, "if you will make that lamb live, you may have it to pay for going after the sheep, and all the ewe lambs she has I will keep for you for their wool, and the male lambs you may sell to the butchers." All night I watched the wee bit of a creature and in the morning it was able to draw its own "rations" from its dam.

Early in the autumn, the frigate *Essex* was to be launched. All the boys in the neighborhood were going. I wanted to go, but Mr. Parker said no. And it was not till several boys had interceded with

him that he gave his consent. We started at midnight, eighteen in all, and walked to Salem, saw the *Essex* leave "the home of her birth," and slide gently down the greased ways, with her precious cargo of curious mortals, anxious to catch the first ride in her as she bathed herself for the first time in the briny deep.

Afterwards we walked about town to see the "elephant," ate gingerbread and pies, and toward night set our faces toward home. It was a most formidable journey for boys of our age, and before we reached home our fatigue was such that we lay down on the ground to rest every half mile.

In the summer season, brown bread and milk was the constant food, for the whole family, morning and night. By brown bread is meant bread made of rye and Indian meal, raised and baked in large loaves in a brick oven. Supper for Saturday was uniformly roast potatoes and salt; no butter was used. The winter rations were beef-broth, with brown bread crumbled in, and for a change, bean porridge. This porridge was made by boiling a piece of pork, with a handful of beans, till they had become soft and smashed; these were then dipped into dishes with bread crumbled in. Our Sunday dinner was invariably baked beans with salt pork, and a baked Indian pudding. A little butter was allowed for the pudding.

The Thanksgiving festival was indeed a luxury. We commonly had fowls and roasted pork, or spare-rib, and plum puddings, with as many as three kinds of pies, — mince, apple and pumpkin. We had as nice a treat at Thanksgiving then, as they have now, and ate it with a greater zest.

My clothes in summer were a straw hat, tow shirt and tow trousers. When the mornings were cool, I put on my vest such as it was, and my frock if required. I had no shoes until the ground began to freeze.

For winter I wore striped blue and white woollen trousers, fulled cloth vest and jacket. They were commonly made of Parker's or Dave's old cast-off ones, which good Mother Parker took care to have well mended, much to my comfort. I was never allowed an overcoat while I lived there, or a pair of boots. I was allowed but one pair of shoes for two years. Parker used to tell me, when I went to get my foot measured, to put on two pair of stockings, and tell the shoemaker to be sure and make them large enough to last two years.

The first year I put old flannel, or baize as it was then called, around my feet to keep the shoes from slipping and wearing out my stockings. Mr. Parker kept shoemaking tools on hand, and when they needed repairs, would tap them with old upper stuff and fill them full of nails to make them last well; and Mother Parker would make me leggings from his old stocking legs.

Tap=put on a sole.

22. The Bells

By George Sheldon (1800)

It was the custom in my younger days to toll the Passing Bell on the death of any person in the community. Nine strokes of the bell at half minute intervals, announced the death of a man, six that of a

woman, and three that of a child. After a short pause a succession of quick strokes gave the age in years, of the departed.

As every dangerous sickness was known to the whole community, all activities ceased at the first peal. In the silence, everybody waited with bated breath to the last, to know what family among them was now bereaved, and where kindly help was needed and most welcome.



AN OLD BELFRY.

How long this custom had existed, I do not know, but it was discontinued about forty or fifty years ago. At funerals the people were called together by the tolling bell.

Minute strokes were given as the procession moved to the grave and continued until the closing words were spoken. Then at a given signal, the service was concluded by rapid strokes giving the age of the departed.

From early times the nine o'clock bell was a regular institution. It was universally understood to be the signal for bed-time, and it was an unwritten law that every body should give heed to it.

Custom and courtesy alike demanded that all visitors who had dropped in to make a call or spend the evening, should make a move to do up the knitting work or look for the hat, at the first stroke of the bell. To any polite request for a longer tarry, the sufficient answer was, "Oh, no, the bell is ringing." It was an old and common saying on such occasions, "It is nine o'clock, time for honest men to go home and rogues about their business."

This was doubtless the Curfew Bell of Old England, established by William the Conqueror, and brought over by our fathers. The name "Curfew," however, was never heard this side of the water. It was considered by the Puritan, I suppose, analogous to dancing round the Maypole, Christmas festivity, and other things on account of which the emigrant had shaken off the dust from his feet.

"Curfew" means "cover the fire."

As there were few clocks and fewer watches, the nine o'clock bell was a great convenience. Of course in cases of calls, or evening parties, the participants did not feel obliged to be "tied to the bell-rope."

To supply the lack of almanacs, as well as of time pieces, it was the custom to wind up the nine o'clock bell with light, quick taps, indicating the day of the month.

The bell was also rung in summer at twelve o'clock M. This was chiefly for the benefit of those working in the meadows — generally the larger part of the male population. The sound filled the waiting ear of tired man and beast with joyful music.

It was not a summons to home and a hot dinner, but to a welcome hour of rest after six or seven hours of labor. In planting time there was a team, usually two yoke of oxen, though often three or four yoke with a horse for leader, a man for plough holder and a boy for driver. These had been slowly but steadily turning the foot deep furrows.

The team was first cared for. After being watered at the most convenient pond or stream, the oxen were chained to the wheels on either side of the cart. They were made happy with a bountiful supply of fragrant hay from the big bundle. The horse tied on one side took his rations over the foreboard of the cart.

The hungry men and boys seated themselves on the ground under the spreading branches of the dinner tree, to discuss the contents of the ample dinner box.

The beef, pork, turnips, and potatoes, the bread and butter, the gingerbread and nut cakes, disappeared like magic, while the jug of cider passed from hand to hand and mouth to mouth.

23. The Tax on Old Bachelors

By Seba Smith (about 1830)

I dreamed a dream in the midst of my slumbers,
And, as fast as I dreamed, it was coined into numbers;
My thoughts ran along in such beautiful metre,
I'm sure I ne'er saw any poetry sweeter.
It seemed that a law had been recently made,
That a tax on old bachelors' pates should be laid;
And in order to make them all willing to marry,
The tax was as large as a man could well carry.
The Bachelors grumbled, and said 'twas no use,
'Twas cruel injustice and horrid abuse,
And declared that, to save their own heart's blood from spilling,
Of such a vile tax they would ne'er pay a shilling.
But the Rulers determined their scheme to pursue,
So they set all the bachelors up at vendue.
A crier was sent thro' the town to and fro,
To rattle his bell, and his trumpet to blow,
And to bawl out at all he might meet in the way,
"Ho! forty old bachelors sold here to-day."
And presently all the old maids in the town,
Each one in her very best bonnet and gown,

From thirty to sixty, fair, plain, red, and pale,
Of every description, all flocked to the sale.
The auctioneer then in his labors began,
And called out aloud, as he held up a man,
"How much for a bachelor? who wants to buy?"
In a twink every maiden responded — "I — I."
In short, at a hugely extravagant price,
The bachelors all were sold off in a trice:
And forty old maidens, some younger, some older,
Each lugged an old bachelor home on her shoulder.

24. Trade without Money

By William Ashe (1806)

The storekeepers are obliged to keep every article which it is possible that the farmer and manufacturer may want. Each of their shops exhibit a complete medley,—a magazine where are to be had both a needle and an anchor, a tin pot and a large copper boiler, a child's whistle and a pianoforte, a ring dial and a clock, a skein of thread and trimmings of lace, a check frock and a muslin gown, a frieze coat and a superfine cloth, a glass of whiskey and a barrel of brandy, a gill of vinegar and hogshead of Madeira wine, &c. Hence you will perceive that money is not always necessary as a circulating medium: however, as farmers and manufacturers advance in business, and find their produce more than equal to the wants of their families, they contract with the storekeeper to receive the annual balance of the latter, either in cash, or in land to an equal amount; for though no person cultivates a tenth part of the land that he possesses, every one

wants to buy more. Thus the great landholders ultimately absorb all the hard money; and as they principally reside in the large towns in the Atlantic States, the money finds its way back to those, and leaves many places here without a single dollar. This causes distress to small farmers who supply the markets with provisions; for whatever they have to sell, whether trivial or important, they receive in return nothing but an order on a store for the value in goods; and as the wants of such persons are few, they seldom know what articles to take. The storekeepers turn this circumstance to advantage, and frequently force on the customer a thing for which he has no use; or, what is worse, when the order is trifling, tell him to sit down at the door and drink the amount if he chooses. As this is often complied with, a market day is mostly a scene of drunkenness and contention, fraud, cunning, and duplicity; the storekeeper denying the possession of a good article, till he fails in imposing a bad one. I have known a person ask for a pair of shoes, and receive for answer that there were no shoes in the store, but some capital gin that could be recommended to him. I have heard another ask for a rifle gun, and be answered that there were no rifles, but that he could be accommodated with the best Dutch looking glasses and German flutes in the western country. Another was directed by his wife to bring her a warming pan, smoothing irons, and scrubbing brushes; but these were denied; and a wooden cuckoo-clock, which the children would not take a week to demolish, was sent home in their stead. I could not help smiling at these absurdities, though I believe they deserve the name of impositions, till an incident reduced me to the condition of

those whom I have just described. I rode an excellent horse to the head of the waters; and finding him of no further use from my having to take boat there, I proposed selling him to the best bidder. I was offered in exchange for him salt, flour, hogs, land, cast iron, salt pans, Indian corn, whiskey — in short, every thing but what I wanted, which was money. The highest offer made, was cast iron salt pans to the amount of one hundred and thirty dollars. I asked the proprietor of this heavy commodity, how much cash he would allow me instead of such an incumbrance; his answer was, without any shame or hesitation, forty dollars at most. I preferred the pans; though they are to be exchanged again for glass bottles at Pittsburg, tobacco or hemp in Kentucky, and dollars in New Orleans. These various commercial processes may occupy twelve months; nor am I then certain of the amount, unless I give thirty per cent to secure it.

The words buy and sell are nearly unknown here; in business nothing is heard but the word trade. "Will you trade your watch, your gun, pistols, horses? &c." means, "Will you change your watch, gun, &c. for corn, pigs, cattle, Indian meal? &c." But you must expect all this from the absence of money.

25. Robert of Lincoln

By William Cullen Bryant (1849)

Merrily swinging on brier and weed,
Near to the nest of his little dame,
Over the mountain-side or mead,
Robert of Lincoln is telling his name:

Bob-o'-link, bob-o'-link,
Spink, spank, spink;
Snug and safe is that nest of ours,
Hidden among the summer flowers.
Chee, chee, chee.



BOBOLINKS.

Robert of Lincoln is gayly drest,
Wearing a bright black wedding coat;
White are his shoulders and white his crest.
Hear him call in his merry note:
Bob-o'-link, bob-o'-link,
Spink, spank, spink;
Look, what a nice new coat is mine,
Sure there was never a bird so fine.
Chee, chee, chee.

Robert of Lincoln's Quaker wife,
Pretty and quiet, with plain brown wings,
Passing at home a patient life,
Broods in the grass while her husband sings:
Bob-o'-link, bob-o'-link,
Spink, spank, spink;
Brood, kind creature; you need not fear
Thieves and robbers while I am here.
Chee, chee, chee.

Modest and shy as a nun is she;
One weak chirp is her only note.
Braggart and prince of braggarts is he,
Pouring boasts from his little throat:
Bob-o'-link, bob-o'-link,
Spink, spank, spink;
Never was I afraid of man;
Catch me, cowardly knaves, if you can!
Chee, chee, chee.

Six white eggs on a bed of hay,
Flecked with purple, a pretty sight!
There as the mother sits all day,
Robert is singing with all his might:
Bob-o'-link, bob-o'-link,
Spink, spank, spink;
Nice good wife, that never goes out,
Keeping house while I frolic about.
Chee, chee, chee.

Soon as the little ones chip the shell,
Six wide mouths are open for food;
Robert of Lincoln bestirs him well,
Gathering seeds for the hungry brood.

Bob-o'-link, bob-o'-link,
Spink, spank, spink;
This new life is likely to be
Hard for a gay young fellow like me.
Chee, chee, chee.

Robert of Lincoln at length is made
Sober with work and silent with care;
Off is his holiday garment laid,
Half forgotten that merry air:
Bob-o'-link, bob-o'-link,
Spink, spank, spink;
Nobody knows but my mate and I
Where our nest and our nestlings lie.
Chee, chee, chee.

Summer wanes; the children are grown;
Fun and frolic no more he knows;
Robert of Lincoln's a humdrum crone;
Off he flies, and we sing as he goes:
Bob-o'-link, bob-o'-link,
Spink, spank, spink;
When you can pipe that merry old strain,
Robert of Lincoln, come back again.
Chee, chee, chee.

26. An Old Fashioned Reading Book

This piece is chosen to show what poor readers children had

Mrs. Lismore. You are quite breathless, Charles, where have you been running so violently?

Charles. From the poultry yard, mamma, where I have been diverting myself with the bravado of the

old gander. I did not observe him till he came toward me very fiercely, when, to induce him to pursue me, I ran from him. He followed, till, supposing he had beaten me, he returned to the geese, who appeared to receive him with acclamations of joy, cackling very loud, and seeming actually to laugh, and to enjoy the triumph of their gallant chief.

three quarters of a century ago. It is taken from a book called "Conversations on Natural History for the use of Children."

Emma. I wish I had been with you, Charles; I have often admired the gambols of these beautiful birds, and wondered how they came by the appellation of *silly*, which is generally bestowed on them. I remember Martha, our nursery maid, used often to call me a *silly goose*. How came they to deserve that term, mamma? they appear to me to have as much intelligence as any of the feathered tribe.

Mrs. Lismore. I have often thought with you, Emma, and supposed that term, like many others, misapplied, for want of examining into the justice of so degrading an epithet.

Charles. What a superb bird this is, Emma; I should think it quite a treasure.

Mrs. Lismore. It would be a very troublesome one to you, Charles, and its loquacious disposition would ill accord with the silence requisite for a student. But this is indeed a beautiful little animal; it is a paroquet, and is a native of the Brazils. They are more highly prized than any of the species. See how rich and variegated its plumage is, what an elegant crest adorns its head! I think it may be called the sovereign of birds, at least in point of beauty, and its crest its crown. Do you know its character, Emma?

Emma. My uncle said he purchased it when very young, and has had it in his possession three years;

it is extremely docile, very good natured and amusing, speaks the English language almost as intelligibly as its master, and has a great variety of songs and phrases and playful tricks in store, with which it endeavours to please.

27. A Hunter hides from a Storm in a Hollow Tree

By John A. McClung (1777)

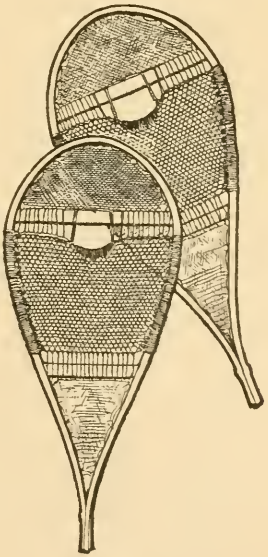
With the Indians nothing can make up for ignorance of the woods. Young Smith, for losing himself, was degraded from the rank of a warrior, and reduced to that of a boy. Two years afterwards, he regained his rank, and was presented with a rifle, as a reward for an exhibition of hardihood and presence of mind. Soon after he went out to hunt, in company with an old chief, and several other Indians. A deep snow lay upon the ground, and the weather was tempestuous. On their way home, some racoon tracks were seen in the snow, and Smith was directed to follow them and observe where the creatures treed.

He was thus led off to a much greater distance than was supposed, and the hunters were several miles ahead of him, when he attempted to rejoin them. At first their tracks were very plain in the snow, and although night approached, and the camp was distant, Smith felt no anxiety; but his situation became critical about dusk. The weather became suddenly much colder, the wind blew a perfect hurricane, and whirlwinds of snow blinded his eyes and filled up the tracks of his companions. He had with

him neither a gun, flint, nor steel — no shelter but a blanket, and no weapon but a tomahawk.

For several hours he plodded on, ignorant of his route, stumbling over logs, and chilled with cold, until the snow became so deep as seriously to check his footsteps, and the flakes fell so thick as to render it impossible to see where he was going. He shouted aloud for help, but no answer was returned, and as the storm every instant became more outrageous, he began to think that his last hour had come. Providentially, in stumbling on through the snow, he came to a large sycamore, with a considerable opening on the windward side. He hastily crept in and found the hollow large enough to accommodate him for the night, if the weather side could be closed so as to exclude the snow and wind, which was beating against it with great violence. He instantly went to work with his tomahawk and cut out a number of sticks, which he placed upright against the hole, and piled brush against it in great quantities, leaving a space open for himself to creep in. He then broke up a decayed log, and cutting it into small pieces, pushed them one by one into the hollow of the tree, and lastly crept in himself. With these pieces he stopped up the remaining holes of his den, until not a chink was left to admit the light.

Before matches were invented people made a fire by striking a flint on a steel and catching the spark in punk.



SNOW SHOES.

The snow, drifting in large quantities, was soon banked up against his defences, and completely sheltered him from the storm, which still continued to rage with undiminished fury. He then danced violently in the centre of his den for two hours, until he was sufficiently warmed, and wrapping himself in his blanket, he slept soundly until morning. He awoke in utter darkness, and groping about, he found his door and attempted to push it away, but the snow had drifted against it in such quantities, that it resisted his utmost efforts. His hair now began to bristle, for he feared that he had with great ingenuity contrived to bury himself alive. He lay down again for several hours, meditating upon what he should do, and whether he should not attempt to cut through the tree with his tomahawk — but at length he made one more desperate effort to push away the door, and succeeded in moving it several inches, when a great bank of snow fell in upon him from above, convincing him at once of the immense quantity which had fallen.

At length he burrowed his way into the upper air, and found it broad daylight, and the weather calm and mild. The snow lay nearly four feet deep — but he was now enabled to see his way clearly, and by following the marks in the bark of the trees, he was able to return to camp. He was received with loud shouts of joy and congratulation, but not a single question was asked until he had despatched a hearty meal of venison, hominy, and sugar.

The old chief, Tecaughnetanego, then presented him with his own pipe, and they all remained silent until Smith had smoked. When they saw him completely refreshed, the venerable chief addressed him in a mild and affectionate manner, (for Smith at that

time, was a mere boy in their eyes) and desired to hear a particular account of the manner in which he had passed the night. Not a word was spoken until Smith had concluded his story, and then he was greeted on all sides with shouts of approbation.

Tecaughnetanego arose and addressed him in a short speech, in which his courage, hardihood and presence of mind were highly commended. He exhorted the young brave to go on as he had begun, and assured him that one day he would make a very great man. He told him that all his brothers rejoiced in his safety, as much as they had lamented his supposed death, that they were preparing snow shoes to go in search of him when he appeared; for as he had been brought up effeminately among the whites, they never expected to see him alive. In conclusion, he was promoted again from the rank of a boy to that of a warrior, and assured that when they sold skins in the spring, at Detroit, they would purchase for him a new rifle. And they faithfully observed their promise.

28. A Georgia Camp Meeting

By Emily Burke (about 1840)

To the country people in the Northern part of Georgia, the season of the annual camp-meeting furnishes a date, from which and before which, all the most important events of the whole year are reckoned. This convocation is to them, what the Thanksgiving day is to the New England people, and it occurs at about the same time of the year. By it, the time for the closing of the summer schools and

commencement of the winter schools is regulated, and many business transactions refer to this time, and for months previous to an event of so much importance to all, every member in the family from the oldest to the youngest, anticipated an addition to his or her wardrobe. This is so well understood by the city merchants and milliners, that they endeavor to make their arrangements, if possible, to meet all the demands upon their stock of fancy and dry goods, during this, as I have heard them say, their best harvest-time in all the year; while Christians in anticipation of a glorious revival of religion, often recall to mind the most eloquent speakers of the past year, and ask who are expected to be the coming season; and the principal topics of conversation among the young and gay will be, costly and elegant articles of dress, who was the "belle" last year and who probably will be this. This rage for dress is not confined to the parlor and keeping rooms, but extends with equal ardor to the kitchen and field, and you might hear the cook at the corn mill and women bending over the plough, each saying, she must have a new pair of shoes, or a new frock, or a new handkerchief for her head.

All past events are reckoned from the last camp-meeting. For instance, you will hear one woman say, she has had a bad cough ever since the camp-meeting, such a person was taken sick with a fever soon after the camp-meeting, another died or was married so many months after the camp-meeting.

The removal of planters from their summer to their winter residences occurs at this time, for the hospitable and generous planter of the South, on occasions such as I am now describing, not only makes provision for the entertainment of his own

family and numerous relations, but also for a large company of strangers; therefore he is obliged to take with him all those household conveniences that are indispensable to the comfort and good order of a well regulated family at home. Consequently, they make their arrangements, in order to avoid the trouble of one extra move in the year, to go with all their goods and chattels from their summer homes to the camp-ground, and from thence to their winter quarters.

The camp-ground I visited was a beautiful square lot of forest land about one acre and a half in extent, laid out amid a native and gigantic growth of oaks several miles from any plantation. On every side of the square, all fronting the centre, the fathers of the principal families constituting these assemblies have each their own family residence. These little habitations are built of logs, having a piazza in front, and their number is sufficient to enclose the entire square; while in the background are arranged all the outhouses belonging to each, such as the kitchens, stables for the horses, as also pens for the swine and folds for the herds and flocks, and coops for the chickens, all of which have been previously stalled for the coming slaughter; and I ought not to forget to mention in this connection, the kennels for the hounds and watch dogs, which are needed even more at such places than on the plantations, and which in many parts of Georgia and South Carolina, constitute the only police of the place.

For several days previous to the commencement of worship, persons from all quarters within the distance of fifteen or twenty miles, are busy in the transportation of all kinds of food and articles of furniture: chairs, tables, beds and bedsteads, cradles for babies,

and coops for chickens, all heaped upon cotton Jersey carts, together with scores of men-servants and women-servants accompanied by a large supply of the canine race equally as well pleased as their masters with every thing new and exciting, are all on the move to the same spot.

After every article of household furniture is arranged in its proper place, as the sailor would say, in "sea trim" and every thing reduced to order and quiet, the whole scene within the camp-ground assumes an aspect not only imposing but beautiful and romantic in the extreme, and particularly so in the evening and during the intervals of worship, when hundreds of young and joyous people, richly and gaily dressed, could be seen moving in all directions, or standing in small groups beneath the shade of some wide spreading tree.

Every man has erected in front of his own house a platform about six feet from the ground and four or five feet square, upon which is laid earth to the depth of about one foot, for the purpose of making a foundation for a fire, which is lighted every evening as soon as the stars begin to appear. This light is kept burning till towards midnight by a constant supply of pitch wood furnished by boys whose business it is to see that the whole camp-ground is sufficiently lighted during the convocation. These great fires at this elevation sent forth such a broad and brilliant sheet of light in all directions, that those who seated themselves in front of their dwellings could read with perfect ease without the aid of any other light, and while millions of sparks emitted from the burning fagots were carried up amid wreaths of curling smoke and lost among the thick

boughs of the trees. The older members of the families would seat themselves beneath the piazzas to witness the pastimes of the children, all collected together to vie with each other in the dexterity of trundling the hoop, throwing the ball, jumping the rope or running races. In all these sports the dogs sustained a part by no means the least conspicuous, with caninish glee running to pick up the fallen hoop, bringing back the ball that had bounded too far, and in the race, often outstripping all the children.

The first thing in the morning, just as the sun is rising, this sleeping congregation is aroused from its slumbers by several loud and long blasts from a hunting trumpet, to attend early prayers, consequently with a slight attention to the toilet, the members of each family are soon collected together for worship. I shall never forget the impression made upon my mind, the first time I ever had the pleasure of being present at one of these scenes. On that morning as soon as we were assembled the master of the family arose and in a sweet, clear and strong voice, sung,

> "A charge to keep I have,
> A God to glorify."

We were assembled in that part of the house called the "dining hall," the front of which was all open to the public view, and as all the other families were similarly situated, the songs of praise which went up from each could be distinctly heard by all the rest, as they resounded that morning through every part of the camp-ground. I never expect to enjoy another scene like this beneath the skies, but in the language of the poet I could sincerely say,

> "My willing soul would stay,
> In such a scene as this."

PART III

TRAVELLERS

29. A Visit to the Natural Bridge

By the Marquis de Chastellux (1782)

I am too near the Natural Bridge to stop at other objects. We set out at nine o'clock in the morning, and to say the truth, rather heedlessly; for in these mountains, where there are either too many or too few roads, people always think they have given sufficient directions to travellers, who seldom fail to go astray. This is the common fault of those who instruct others in what they themselves are well acquainted with; nor are the roads to knowledge exempt from this inconvenience. After riding about two miles however, we luckily met a man who had just got his horse shod at a neighbouring forge, and was returning home, followed by two or three couple of hounds.

The Natural Bridge is in the mountains of western Virginia.

We soon entered into conversation with him, and what seldom happens in America, he was curious to know who I was, and whither I was going. My quality of a General Officer in the French service, and the desire I expressed of seeing the wonders of his country, inspired him with a kind of affection for

me, and he offered to be our conductor. He led us sometimes through little paths, at others through woods, but continually climbing or descending moun-



THE NATURAL BRIDGE.

tains; so that without a guide, nothing short of witchcraft could have enabled us to find the road. After we had thus travelled for two hours, we at last descended a steep declivity, and then mounted another; during which time he endeavoured to render the conversation more interesting. At last, pushing his horse on briskly, and stopping suddenly, he said to me, "You desire to see the Natural Bridge, don't you Sir? You are now upon it, alight and go twenty

steps either to the right or left, and you will see this prodigy." I had perceived that there was on each side a considerable deep hollow, but the trees had prevented me from forming any judgment, or paying much attention to it.

Approaching the precipice, I saw at first two great masses or chains of rocks, which formed the bottom of a ravine, or rather of an immense abyss; but placing myself, not without precaution, upon the brink of the precipice, I saw that these two buttresses were joined under my feet, forming a vault, of which I could yet form no idea but of its height. After enjoying this magnificent but tremendous spectacle, which many persons could not bear to look at, I went to the western side, the aspect of which was not less imposing, but more picturesque.

But it is at the foot of these rocks, on the edge of a little stream which flows under this immense arch, that we must judge of its astonishing structure. The arch is not complete, the eastern part of it not being so large as the western, because the mountain is more elevated on this than on the opposite side. It is very extraordinary that at the bottom of the stream there appear no considerable ruins, no trace of any violent laceration, which could have destroyed the kernel of the rock, and have left the upper part alone subsisting; for that is the only hypothesis that can account for such a prodigy. We can have no possible recourse either to a volcano or a deluge, no trace of a sudden conflagration, or of a slow and tedious undermining by the water.

30. A Tavern near the Hudson

By Marquis de Chastellux (1788)

Being very dark, it was not without difficulty I passed two or three rivulets, on very small bridges, and got to Courtheath's Tavern. This Inn is lately established, and kept by young people without fortune, consequently the best parts of the furniture are the owner and his family. Mr. Courtheath is a young man of four-and-twenty, who was formerly a travelling dealer in stuffs, toys. The depreciation of paper money, or perhaps his own imprudence, so far ruined him as to oblige him to leave his house at Morris-Town, and set up a tavern in this out of the way place, where nothing but the neighbourhood of the army can procure him a few customers. He has two handsome sisters, well dressed girls, who wait on travellers with grace and coquetry. Their brother says, he will marry them to some fat, clumsy Dutchmen, and that as for himself, as soon as he has got a little money, he shall resume his commerce, and travel about as formerly. On entering the parlour, where these young women sit, when there are no strangers, I found on a great table, Milton, Addison, Richardson, and several other works of that kind. The cellar was not so well stored as the library, for there was neither wine, cider, nor rum. The bill they presented me the next morning amounted nevertheless to sixteen dollars. I observed to Mr. Courtheath, that if he made one pay for being waited on by his pretty sisters, it was by much too little; but if only for lodgings and supper, it was a great deal. He seemed a little ashamed at having charged too high,

and offered to make a pretty considerable abatement, which I refused, content with having shown him, that though a foreigner, I was no stranger to the price of articles, and satisfied with the excuse he made me, that being himself a stranger and without property in the country, he was obliged to purchase every thing. I learned, on this occasion, that he hired the inn he kept, as well as a large barn which served for a stable, and a garden of two or three acres, for eighty-four bushels of corn a year: in fact, the depreciation of paper has compelled people to this manner of making bargains, which is perhaps the best of all, but is unquestionably an effectual remedy to the present disorder.

31. A Day in a Stage Coach

By Brissot de Warville (1788)

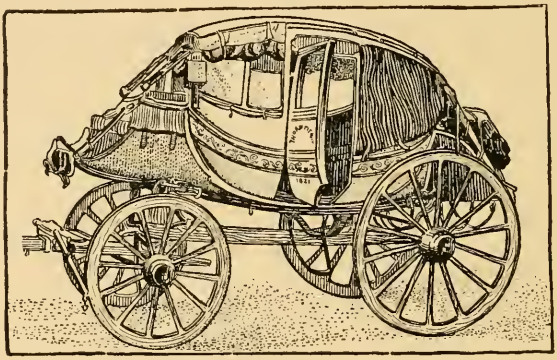
I went from New York the 25th of August, at six o'clock in the morning, and had the North River to pass before arriving to the stage. We passed the ferry in an open boat, and landed at Paulus Hook: they reckon two miles for this ferry, for which we pay sixpence, money of New York.

North River = Hudson.

The carriage is a kind of open wagon, hung with double curtains of leather and woollen, which you raise or let fall at pleasure. But the road was so fine, being sand and gravel, that we felt no inconvenience from that circumstance. The horses are good, and go with rapidity. These carriages have four benches, and may contain twelve persons. The light baggage is put under the benches, and the trunks fixed on

behind. A traveller who does not choose to take the stage, has a one-horse carriage by himself.

Let the Frenchmen who have travelled in these carriages, compare them to those used in France; to



A STAGE COACH OF 1829.

those heavy diligences, where eight or ten persons are stuffed in together; to those cabriolets in the environs of Paris, where two persons are closely confined, and deprived of air, by a dirty driver, who torments his miserable horses: such carriages have to run over the finest roads, and yet make but one league an hour. If the Americans had such roads, with what rapidity would they travel, since, notwithstanding the badness of many highways, they now run ninety-six miles in a day. Thus, with only a century and a half of settlement, and in the face of a thousand obstacles, they are already superior to people who have been undisturbed in their progress of fifteen centuries.

Three miles.

You find in the stages, men of all professions. They succeed each other with rapidity. One who goes but twenty miles, yields his place to one who

goes farther. The mother and daughter mount the stage to go ten miles to dine; another stage brings them back. At every instant, then, you are making new acquaintances. The frequent passing of these carriages, the ease of finding places in them, and the low and fixed price, invite the Americans to travel.

The stage-coaches have another advantage, they keep up the idea of equality. The member of Congress is placed by the side of the shoemaker who elected him. You see no person here taking upon himself those important airs, which you too often meet with in France. In that country, a man of condition would blush to travel in a diligence: it is an ignoble carriage; one who knows not with whom he may find himself. Besides, it is in style to run post; this style serves to humiliate those who are condemned to a sad mediocrity. It is then fortunate for America, that the nature of things prevents distinction in the mode of travelling.

The son of Governor Livingston was in the stage with me; I should not have found him out, so civil and easy was his air, had not the tavern-keepers from time to time addressed him with respectful familiarity. I am told that the governor himself often uses those stages. You may have an idea of this respectable man, who is at once a writer, a governor, and a plowman, on learning that he takes a pride in calling himself a New Jersey farmer.

The American stages, then, are the true political carriages. I know that the *petits maitres* of France would prefer a gay well-suspended chariot; but these carriages roll in countries of Bastilles, in countries afflicted with great inequality, and consequently with great misery. Dandies.

32. A Troubled Journey

By Francis Hopkinson (1790)

Though Mr. Hopkinson probably never made precisely this journey, he recounts the ordinary incidents of the way.

Our jaunt had been the daily subject of discussion at breakfast, dinner, and supper for a month before the time fixed upon for putting it in execution. As our daughter Jenny could by no means be left at home, many and great were the preparations to equip Miss and her Mamma for this important journey; and yet, as my wife assured me, there was nothing provided but what was absolutely necessary, and which we could not possibly do without.

At last, the long expected day arrived. No sooner was it fair day-light, but up started my notable wife, and soon roused the whole family. The little trunk was stuffed with baggage, even to bursting, and tied behind the chair, and the chair-box was crammed with trumpery which we could not possibly do without. Miss Jenny was drest, and breakfast devoured in haste: the old negro wench was called in, and the charge of the house committed to her care; and the two apprentices and the hired maid received many wholesome cautions and instructions for their conduct during our absence, all which they most liberally promised to observe.

At length, however, we set off, and turning the first corner, lost sight of our habitation, with great regret on my part, and no less joy on the part of Miss Jenny and her Mamma. When we got to Poole's Bridge, there happened to be a great concourse of wagons, and carts, so that we could not pass for some time — Miss Jenny frightened — my wife very impatient and uneasy — wondered I did not call out to those im-

pudent fellows to make way for us. Having got through this difficulty, we proceeded without obstruction — my wife in good humour — Miss Jenny in high spirits. At Kensington fresh troubles arise — "Bless me, Miss Jenny," says my wife, "where is the band-box?" "I don't know, Mamma; the last time I saw it, it was on the table in your room." What's to be done? the band-box is left behind — it contains Miss Jenny's new wire-cap — there is no possibility of doing without it — As well no New York as no wire-cap — there is no alternative, we must even go back for it.

Teased and mortified as I was, my good wife administered consolation by observing, "That it was my business to see that every thing was put into the chair that ought to be, but there was no depending upon me for any thing; and that she plainly saw I undertook this journey with an ill-will, merely because she had set her heart upon it." Silent patience was my only remedy. An hour and an half restored to us this essential requisite — the wire-cap, and brought us back to the place where we first missed it.

After innumerable difficulties and unparalleled dangers, occasioned by ruts, stumps, and tremendous bridges, we arrived at Neshamony ferry: but how to cross it was the question. My wife protested that neither she nor Jenny would go over in the boat with the horse. I assured her that there was not the least danger; that the horse was as quiet as a dog, and that I would hold him by the bridle all the way. These assurances had little weight: the most forcible argument was that she must go that way or not at all, for there was no other boat to be had. Thus persuaded, she ventured in — The flies were trouble-

some — the horse kicked — my wife in panics — Miss Jenny in tears.

As we started pretty early, and as the days were long, we reached Trenton by two o'clock. Here we dined. My wife found fault with every thing; and whilst she disposed of what I thought a tolerable hearty meal, declared there was nothing fit to eat. Matters, however, would have gone on pretty well, but Miss Jenny began to cry with the toothache.

After dinner we again entered upon our journey — my wife in good humour — Miss Jenny's toothache much easier — various chat — I acknowledge every thing my wife says for fear of discomposing her. We arrive in good time at Princeton. My wife and daughter admire the College. We refresh ourselves with tea, and go to bed early, in order to be up by times for the next day's expedition.

In the morning we set off again in tolerable good humour, and proceeded happily as far as Rocky-hill. Here my wife's fears and terrors returned with great force. I drove as carefully as possible; but coming to a place where one of the wheels must unavoidably go over the point of a small rock, my wife, in a great fright, seized hold of one of the reins, which happening to be the wrong one, she pulled the horse so as to force the wheel higher up the rock than it would otherwise have gone, and overset the chair. We were all tumbled hickledy-pickledy, into the road — Miss Jenny's face all bloody — the woods echo to her cries — my wife in a fainting fit — and I in great misery. Matters begin to mend — my wife recovers — Miss Jenny has only received a slight scratch on one of her cheeks — the horse stands quite still, and none of the harness broke. Matters grew worse again;

the twine with which the band-box was tied had broke in the fall, and the aforesaid wire-cap lay soaking in a nasty mud-puddle — grievous lamentations over the wire-cap — all my fault because I did not tie it better — no remedy — no wire-caps to be bought at Rocky-hill.

After passing unhurt over the imminent dangers of Passaiack and Hackensack rivers, and the yet more tremendous horrors of Pawlas Hook ferry, we arrived, at the close of the third day, at cousin Snip's in the city of New York.

Here we sojourned a tedious week ; my wife spent as much money as would have maintained my family for a month at home, in purchasing a hundred useless articles which we could not possibly do without.

On the seventh day my wife declared that my business would not admit of a longer absence from home — and so after much ceremony, in which my wife was by no means exceeded by her polite cousin, we left the famous city of New York ; and I with heart-felt satisfaction looked forward to the happy period of our safe arrival in Water-street, Philadelphia.

But this blessing was not to be obtained without much vexation and trouble — we were caught in a thunder storm — our horse failed, by which we were benighted three miles from our stage — my wife's panics returned — Miss Jenny howled, and how very miserable I was made. Suffice it to say, that, after many distressing disasters, we arrived at the door of our own habitation in Water-street.

33. Travelling by Canoes

By Isaac Weld (1796)

The journey was in western New York.

Had it been practicable, it was our intention to have proceeded from Bath by water; but finding that it was not, we once more set off on foot, and pursued our way along the banks of the river till we came to a small village of eight or ten houses, called Newtown, about thirty miles distant from Bath. Here we found the stream tolerably deep, and the people informed us, that excepting at one or two narrow shoals, they were certain that in every part of it, lower down, there was sufficient water for canoes; accordingly, determined to be our own watermen, as we were five in number including our servants, we purchased a couple of canoes from two farmers, who lived on the banks of the river, lashed them together, in order to render them more steady and safe, put our baggage on board, and boldly embarked.

It was about three o'clock on a remarkably clear though cold afternoon that we left the village, and as the current was strong, we hoped to be able to reach before night a tavern, about six miles below Newtown. For the first two miles we got on extremely well; but beyond this the river proving to be much shallower than we had been led to believe, we found it a matter of the utmost difficulty to proceed. Our canoes repeatedly struck upon the shoals, and so much time was consumed in setting them again free, that before we had accomplished more than two-thirds of our voyage the day closed.

As night advanced a very sensible change was observable in the weather; a heavy shower of hail

came pouring down, and involved us in thick darkness, while the moon was obscured by a cloud; our canoes were drifted on a bank in the middle of the river by the current. In endeavouring to extricate ourselves unfortunately, owing to the darkness, we took a wrong direction; and at the end of a few minutes found our canoes so firmly wedged in the gravel that it was impossible to move them. Nothing now remained to be done but for every one of us to jump into the water, and to put his shoulder to the canoes. This we accordingly did, and having previously unlashed them in order to render them more manageable, we in a short time contrived to haul one of them into deep water. Here, however, the rapidity of the current was so great, that notwithstanding all our endeavours to the contrary, the canoe was forcibly swept away from us, and in the attempt to hold it fast we had the misfortune to see it nearly filled with water.

Deprived thus of one of our canoes, and of a great part of our baggage in it, which, for aught we knew, was irrecoverably lost, we determined to proceed more cautiously with the remaining one; we returned, therefore, to the bank, and carried every thing that was in the canoe on our shoulders to the shore, which was about forty yards distant; no very easy or agreeable task, as the water reached up to our waists, and the current was so strong that it was with the utmost difficulty we could keep our feet. As soon as the canoe was emptied, we brought it, as nearly as we could guess, to the spot where the other one had been swept away from us; and one of the party then got into it with a paddle, and we committed it to the stream, hoping that it would be carried down after

the other, and that thus we should be able to recover both with the things which they contained.

In a few seconds the stream carried the canoe out of our sight, for the moon shone but faintly through the clouds, and as the men were all totally unacquainted with the river, we could not but feel some concern for the personal safety of our companion. Before many minutes elapsed, we had the satisfaction of hearing his voice at a distance, and as soon as we could make our way along the shore to the spot whence the sound proceeded, we had the satisfaction to find that he had been carried in safety close beside the canoe which had been lost. We were not a little pleased also at finding our portmanteaus at the bottom of the canoe, though well soaked in water; but such of our clothes as we had taken off preparatory to going into the water, together with several light articles, were all lost.

It froze so hard that in a few minutes our portmanteaus, and such of our garments as had been wet, were covered with a coat of ice, and our limbs were quite benumbed, in consequence of our having waded so often through the river. Desirous, as we were to get to a house, we determined first of all, to put our baggage in a safe place, lest it might be pillaged. A deep hollow under some fallen trees seemed well adapted for the purpose, and we stowed it there, and covered it with leaves, before we advanced forward. There were no traces whatsoever of a path in the woods where we landed, and for upwards of a mile we had to force our way through the bushes along the banks of the river; but at the end of that distance we hit upon one, which in a short time brought us to a miserable little log house. At this house no accom-

modation whatsoever was to be had; but we were told, that if we followed the path through the woods for about a mile farther, we should come to a wagon road, upon which we should find another house, where probably we might gain admittance. We reached this house according to the directions we had received and readily gained admittance; the blaze of an immense wood fire, piled half way up the chimney, soon made us amends for what we had suffered.

The cold of the air, together with the fatigue which we had gone through in the course of the day, had by this time given a keen edge to our appetites. No sooner had we warmed ourselves than we began to make enquiries about what we could get to satisfy the calls of hunger; but had we asked for a sheep or an ox for supper at an inn in England, the man of the house could not, I verily believe, have been more amazed than was our American landlord at these enquiries: "The women were in bed" — "He knew not where to find the keys" — "He did not believe there was any thing in the pantry" — "Provisions were very scarce in the country" — "If he gave us any there would not be enough for the family in the morning" — Such were his answers to us. However we plied him so closely, and gave him such a pitiable description of our sufferings, that at length he was moved; the keys were found, the pantry opened, and to satisfy the hunger of five hungry young men, two little flour cakes, scarcely as big as a man's hand each, and about a pint and a half of milk, were brought forth. He vowed he could give us nothing more; his wife would never pardon him if he did not leave enough for their breakfasts in the morning. Obliged therefore to remain satisfied, we

ate our little pittance, and then laid ourselves down to rest on our furs, which we had brought with us on our shoulders.

In the morning we found our canoes and baggage just as we had left them. We embarked once more, and made the best of our way down to the house where we had ordered breakfast, which stood on the banks of the river. The people here were extremely civil; they assisted us in making fresh paddles, in lieu of those which we had lost the night before.

After breakfast we continued for about seven miles down the river, but in the course of this distance we were obliged to get into the water more than a dozen different times, I believe, to drag the canoes over the shoals. By the time we arrived at a house in the afternoon, we were completely disgusted with our water conveyance; and had we not been able to procure two men, to conduct our canoes to the mouth of Tayoga River, where there was reason to imagine that the water would be found deeper, we should certainly have left them behind us.

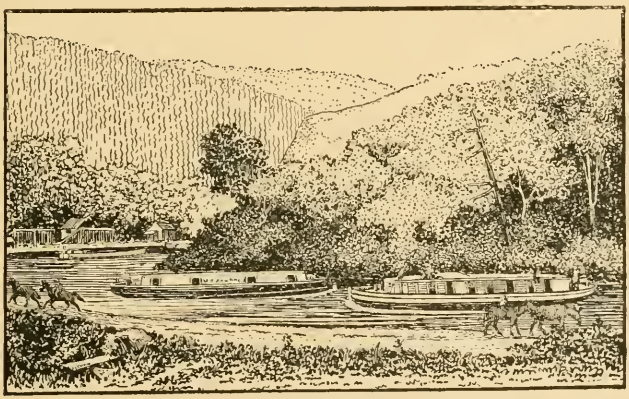
We found no difficulty, in hiring from amongst the watermen accustomed to ply on the river, a man that was perfectly well acquainted with it. After exchanging our two canoes, according to his advice, for one of a very large size, capable of holding us all conveniently, we renewed our voyage.

34. A Fiddler on the Ohio

By James Hall (1820)

This gives a lively picture of the life on the Ohio River.

In the early part of our voyage we overtook a flat boat floating down the stream, and in passing, were hailed by a person on the roof, who was no sooner recognized by our boatmen than a murmur of joy ran throughout the boat. In a few minutes the stranger came on board, and was received with a



A RIVER SCENE.

hearty welcome by our men, who saluted him by the title of "Pappy." He seemed to be about fifty years of age, but his eye had all the fire, and his step the elasticity, of youth; a continual smile lurked among his sly features, and the jest was ever on his lips; while an affected gravity, a drawling accent, and a kind, benevolent manner, which accorded well with the paternal appellation given him by the boatmen, marked him as an eccentric being.

"Our Pappy" was a humorist, and his sway among his fellow boatmen was unlimited. To the great joy of the crew, he was hired for the trip, and hastened back to the flat, to bring, as he expressed it, "Katy and his plunder on board." Katy, whose merry voice we soon heard, was no other than a violin, and his plunder consisted of a small parcel of clothing tied up in a bandanna handkerchief. It was I suppose his all — had it been less, "Old Pap" would still have been merry; if it had been infinitely greater he would still have joked and fiddled. While others worked, he would sit for hours scraping upon his violin, singing catches, or relating merry or marvellous tales. When he chose to labour he went to the oar, when inclined to trifle he held off, and no one questioned his motions; but, whether at work or at play, he applied himself with all his heart. If the boat grounded on a sand-bar, he was the first to plunge into the water; if a point was to be weathered, or a rapid to be passed, his was always the best oar; if a watch was to be kept at night, who so wakeful as he? And on such occasions, he would fiddle and sing the live-long night. In short, with the affectation, and somewhat of the appearance of age, he was the gayest, most active, and stoutest man on board; and I was told that there were but few men along the river, who would have undertaken to handle "Old Pap."

This new recruit proved a great acquisition, for, like all other merry men, he was the cause of merriment in others. He kept our own crew in good humour, and hailed every boat we passed with some stroke of pleasantry. More than once he enacted chief musician at dances, at the hovels along shore, near which we lay by for the night.

35. An Early Steamboat

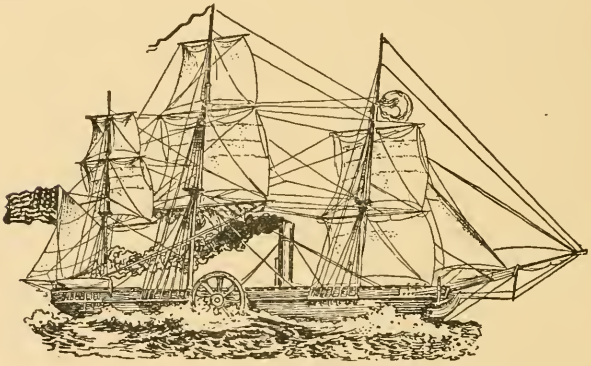
By Francis Hall (1816)

I EMBARKED on the 9th of March, in the Paragon steam packet, from New York to Albany. The winter had been less severe than usual, which induced the captain to attempt making his way up the Hudson earlier than is customary. These steam-boats are capable of accommodating from two to three hundred passengers; they are about one hundred and twenty feet in length, and as elegant in their construction as the awkward-looking machinery in the centre will permit. There are two cabins, one for the ladies, into which no gentleman is admitted without the concurrence of the whole company. The interior arrangements on the whole, resemble those of our best packets. I was not without apprehension, that a dinner in such a situation, for above a hundred and fifty persons, would very much resemble the scramble of a mob; but I was agreeably surprised by a dinner handsomely served, very good attendance, and a general attention to quiet and decorum. Indeed when the cabin was lighted up for tea and sandwiches in the evening, it more resembled a ball-room supper, than, as might have been expected, a stage-coach meal. The charge, including board, from New York to Albany, one hundred and sixty miles, is seven dollars.

We started under the auspices of a bright frosty morning. The first few minutes were naturally spent by me in examining the machinery, by means of which our huge leviathan, with such evident ease, won her way against the opposing current. More

L. of C.

interesting objects are breaking fast on the view; on our right are the sloping sides of New York Island, studded with villas, over a soil from which the hand of cultivation has long since rooted its woodland glories, and substituted the more varied decorations of park and shrubbery, intersected with brown stubbles and meadows; on our left, the bold features of nature rise, as in days of yore, unimpaired, unchangeable; grey cliffs, like aged battlements, tower perpen-



AN EARLY STEAMBOAT.

dicularly from the water's edge to the height of several hundred feet. Hickory, dwarf oak, and stunted cedars twist fantastically within their crevices, and deepen the shadows of each glen into which they occasionally recede; huge masses of disjointed rocks are scattered at intervals below; here the sand has collected sufficiently to afford space for the woodman's hut, but the narrow waterfall, which in summer turns his saw-mill, is now a mighty icicle glittering to the morning sun; here and there a scarcely percep-

tible track conducts to the rude wharf, from which the weather-worn lugger receives her load of timber for the consumption of the city.

Evening began to close in as we approached the highlands: the banks on either side towered up more boldly, and a wild tract of mountain scenery rose beyond them. The river, which had been gradually widening, now expanded into a capacious lake, to which the eye could distinguish no outlet; flights of wild fowl were skimming over its smooth surface to their evening shelter, and the last light of day rested faintly on a few white farm houses, glimmering at intervals from the darkening thickets. Ver-Planks Point shuts the northern extremity of this first basin; then the river continues its course within a cliff-bound channel, until, after a few miles, it again opens out amid the frowning precipices of West Point. Here are the same features of scenery as at Ver-Planks Point, but loftier mountains skirt the lake; and cliffs of more gigantic stature almost hang over the gliding sail.

This was the land of romance to the early settlers: Indian tradition had named the highlands the prison within which Manetho confined the spirits rebellious to his power, until the mighty Hudson, rolling through the stupendous defiles of West Point, burst asunder their prison house; but they long lingered near the place of their captivity, and as the blasts howled through the valleys, echo repeated their groans to the startled ear of the solitary hunter, who watched by his pine-tree fire for the approach of morning. The lights, which occasionally twinkled from the sequestered bay, or wooded promontory, sufficiently told that these fancies, like the Indians, who had in-

vented or transmitted them, must by this time have given way to the unpoetic realities of civilised life.

Masses of floating ice, which had, at intervals through the evening, split upon the bow of our ark, became so frequent immediately on our passing West Point as to oblige us to come to anchor for the night; a pretty sure prognostic that there was nearly an end to our feather-bed travelling. The next morning we found ourselves lying close to the flourishing little settlement of Newburgh, on the right bank of the river. Our captain concluded to terminate his voyage here, and moved over to Fishkill, on the opposite shore, to give us means of accommodating ourselves with conveyances, in the best way we could.

36. A Canal Trip

By C. D. Arfwedson (1825)

On returning to Schenectady, I availed myself of a canal-boat on the point of starting for Utica. These boats are generally very long, but low, in consequence of the many bridges thrown across the canal, beneath which they must pass. They are fitted up with two rooms, one inside the other, taking up the whole length of the boat, with small windows on the sides. The inner room belonged exclusively to the ladies, and was considered as a sanctuary into which the profane dared not set foot; the outer one again was used both as a drawing, dining, and bed room for the gentlemen.

When — as was the case now — the number of travellers exceeded thirty, the prospect of remaining on

board twenty-two hours was not very agreeable. It was impossible either to walk, to sit, or to lie down. Moving about upon deck was out of the question, owing to the number of bridges beneath which we had to pass; at every passage it became necessary for the whole company to lie down flat, to avoid being swept away by the beams of the bridge. As soon as we approached one, which happened every five minutes, the steersman called out, "Bridge!" and at the same instant the company fell prostrate. It was ludicrous for a while to take part in this manœuvre; in the long run, however, it became wearisome, and no other alternative was left but to go down, by way of change, into the close and narrow cabin.

Night made our situation still more uncomfortable. Although three tiers of beds, one above another, had been fitted up on the sides, their number proved insufficient; the floor was covered with mattresses. Had I been permitted to select a sleeping place, I should unquestionably have preferred a mattress on the floor, for the beds on the sides were only slung by a cord to the top: had that given way the whole sleeping apparatus would have been precipitated to the floor; and the consequences might have been serious, from the weight of some of the travellers. Unfortunately, nearly all had the same idea as myself. The captain, a peaceable man, who wished to accommodate every one, saw that it was not in his power to do so, except by drawing lots for the berths. I drew my number with a trembling hand, and behold! it turned out to be one of the lowest beds on the side.

The prospect now darkened indeed: to lie down, having two other berths occupied by heavy inmates above, and only supported by small cords, was not a

pleasant prospect. But what was to be done? I had no other chance but quietly to take my place, unless I chose to spend the night on deck; and this was still more objectionable, owing to a heavy rain which continued till the following morning. I thought it prudent, however, to enter into a conversation with the occupants of the upper regions, stipulating that they should remain quiet in their berths, and that, if a change of position became absolutely necessary, they should inform me beforehand of their intention, to guard against the possibility of accidents. Immediately above me lay a young man, who, by his reserved and strange behaviour, had already attracted my attention; and above him rested an excessively fat man, whose frame took up more room than was allotted to two.

The beginning of the night was rather auspicious; I already felt reconciled to my unpleasant situation, and amused myself by listening to the different sounds, from the finest tenor to the strongest bass, proceeding from the snoring gentry. A sudden thump against my side of the boat at length spread consternation among the travellers. The shock, occasioned by another craft coming too close to ours, was so violent, that the beams cracked, and the doors flew open. About a dozen sleeping individuals were precipitated from the second and third tier on the unfortunate beings who were lying on the floor. One cord gave way after another. Snoring ceased: lamentations filled the room. All were running, shoving against each other, and making a noise in the dark: confusion, in short, was at its height, until the captain reported that there was no danger, and the berths were soon again in use.



FANNY KEMBLE.

37. Hudson River and Young Folks

By Frances Anne Kemble (1832)

At six o'clock Dick roused me; and grumpily enough I arose. Really by way of a party of pleasure, 'tis too abominable to get up in the middle of the night this fashion. At half past six, Colonel Wilson came, and we set off to walk to the quay. Just as we were nearing the bottom of Barclay street, the bell rang from the steamboat, to summon all loiterers on board; and forthwith we rushed, because in this country steam and paddles, like wind and tide in others, wait for no man. We got on board in plenty time, but Dick was nearly killed with the pace at which we had walked, in order to do so. One of the first persons we saw was Mr. Hoyt, who was going up to his father's place beyond West Point, by name Hyde Park, which sounds magnificent. I did not remain long on the second deck, but ascended to the first with Colonel Wilson, and paced to and fro with infinite zeal till breakfast time.

The morning was grey and sad looking, and I feared we should not have a fine day: however, towards eight o'clock the grey clouds parted, and the blue serene eyes of heaven looked down upon the waters, the waves began to sparkle, though the sun had not yet appeared; the sky was lighter, and faint shadows began to appear beside the various objects that surrounded us, all which symptoms raised our hopes of the weather. At eight o'clock

we went down to breakfast. Nobody who has not seen it, can conceive the strange aspect of the long room of one of these fine boats at meal-time. The crowd, the hurry, the confusion of tongues, like the sound of many waters, the enormous consumption of eatables, the mingled demands for more, the cloud of black waiters hovering down the sides of the immense tables, the hungry, eager faces seated at them, form altogether a most amusing subject of contemplation, and a caricaturist would find ample matter for his vein in almost every other devouring countenance.

As far as regards the speed, safety, and convenience with which these vessels enable one to perform what would be in any other conveyance most fatiguing journeys, they are admirable inventions. The way in which they are conducted, too, deserves the highest commendation. Nothing can exceed the comfort with which they are fitted up, the skill with which they are managed, and the order and alacrity with which passengers are taken up from, or landed at the various points along the river. The steamer goes at the rate of fifteen miles an hour, and in less than two minutes when approaching any place of landing, the engine stops, the boat is lowered — the captain always convoys his passengers himself from the steamer to the shore — away darts the tiny skiff, held by a rope to the main boat; as soon as it grazes the land, its freight, animate and inanimate, is bundled out, the boat hauls itself back in an instant, and immediately the machine is in motion, and the vessel again bounding over the water like a race-horse.

Doubtless all this has many and great advantages;

but to an English person, the mere circumstance of being the whole day in a crowd is a nuisance. In spite, therefore, of all its advantages, this mode of journeying has its drawbacks. And the greatest of all, to me, is the being companioned by so many strangers, who crowd about you, pursue their conversation in your very ears, or, if they like it better, listen to yours, stare you out of all countenance, and squeeze you out of all comfort. I think this constant living in public is one reason why the young women here are much less retiring and shy than English girls. Instead of the domestic privacy in which women among us are accustomed to live and move, and have their being, here they are incessantly, as Mr. Mayne says, "*en evidence*." Accustomed to the society of strangers, mixing familiarly with persons of whom they know nothing earthly, subject to the gaze of a crowd from morning till night, pushing, and pressing, and struggling in self-defence, conversing, and being conversed with, by the chance companions of a boarding-house, a steamboat, or the hotel of a fashionable watering-place; they must necessarily lose everything like reserve or bashfulness of deportment, and become free and familiar in their manners, and noisy and unrefined in their tone and style of conversation. An English girl of sixteen, put on board one of these Noah's arks, (for verily there be clean and unclean beasts in them,) would feel and look like a scared thing. The term which I should say applied best to the tone and carriage of American girls from ten to eighteen, is hoydenish; laughing, giggling, romping, flirting, screaming at the top of their voices, running in and out of shops, and spending a very considerable por-

tion of their time in lounging about in the streets. In Philadelphia and Boston, almost all the young ladies attend classes or day schools, and in the latter place, I never went out, morning, noon, or evening, that I did not meet, in some of the streets round the Tremont House, a whole bevy of young school girls, who were my very particular friends, but who, under pretext of going to, or returning from school, appeared to me to be always laughing, and talking, and running about in the public thoroughfares; a system of education which we should think by no means desirable. The entire liberty which the majority of young ladies are allowed to assume, at an age when in England they would be under strict nursery discipline, appears very extraordinary; they not only walk alone in the streets, but go out into society, where they take a determined and leading part, without either mother, aunt, or chaperon of any sort; custom, which renders such an appendage necessary with us, entirely dispenses with it here; the reason of this is obvious enough in the narrow circles of these small towns, where every body knows every body.

38. A Child's Voyage on the Ohio

By Henry M. Brackenridge (1834)

The good squire brought me back to Pittsburg, riding behind him on horseback. I remember the smell of the coal-smoke in coming down Coal Hill, and was pleased with the appearance of the syca-

mores growing along the bank of the Monongahela, with the milk-white bark of their trunks and branches. My father seemed pleased with my speaking German, which would not have been the case if he had understood the language. He always entertained a very high idea of the importance of this kind of acquirement, and would often repeat the saying, "that a man doubles himself by learning another language." For this reason, or perhaps in consequence of some original plan of education, he conceived the idea of sending me to a French village in Louisiana, in order to pass the time in acquiring that important language, which might otherwise have been spent in rolling hoops or playing marbles in the street. A French gentleman of his acquaintance was about to visit St. Genevieve, a village on the Mississippi, and consented to take me with him. Without regarding the distance, which was fifteen hundred miles, through a wilderness, and at that time the theater of a bloody Indian war, it was resolved to seize the opportunity which presented itself of executing his design. It was therefore settled that I should accompany the French gentleman, who engaged to place me in a French family, where I might learn the language. Although nothing could have been better intended than this measure, it is one which few persons will approve. It is true I learned the French language, from which I afterward derived both pleasure and advantage, and it was my fortune to fall into good hands; but it might have been otherwise.

It must have been in the spring of the year when I left Pittsburg, for the water was high, and I recollect seeing some garden-flowers growing wild. When

I went into the flat-boat, poor Joe could with difficulty be prevented from accompanying me; he wept bitterly and embraced me affectionately. With the exception of the French gentleman in whose charge I was placed, my companions, at least for a considerable part of the way, were, of all others, the most likely to be pernicious to a child of my age; they consisted of common soldiers, to the number of thirty, under the command of an ensign, on their way to the army. It was fortunate for me that, owing to the high waters, this part of our voyage was short in its duration, although the distance was five hundred miles.

A little incident also happened shortly after our departure, which placed me at some distance from my companions of the voyage. My trunk was broken open, and six shillings in silver, which had purchased my consent to depart from my native spot, were taken out by one unknown. The soldiers were suspected; the ensign, who was indignant, made strict search to no purpose, and on receiving some insolent language from a corporal or sergeant, drew his sword, struck him over the head — the purple stream followed the blow. Such circumstances stamp themselves strongly on the infant mind, and I ascribe to it a dislike which I have to military discipline.

I can recollect but few particulars of the voyage. In my childish simplicity, I thought we had reached the end of the river when we came to a part where the stream turns suddenly to the left, apparently presenting a barrier of hills athwart its course. Being by this time tired of the voyage, I asked them to take me back. In the evening I was put to a new trial; a piece of fat pork, chocolate in a tin cup, and

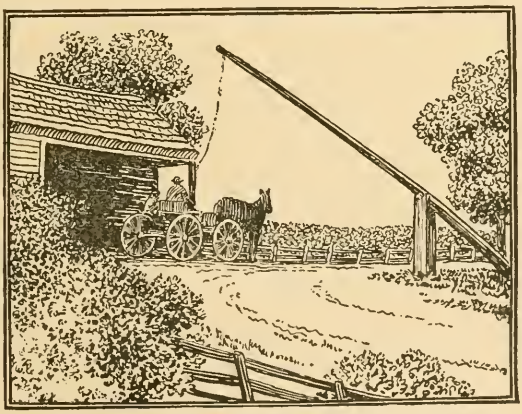
some ship-biscuit were given to me for supper. The fat meat disgusted me; the chocolate was unpalatable; but being afraid to make known these antipathies, the offensive mess was privately thrown overboard. I soon found, however, that there is no cure like starving for an overdelicate appetite; and after awhile my disgust was gradually placed under control. I consider this a valuable practical lesson. How many a spoilt child have I seen, who might be cured by the discipline of the flat-boat!

In ten days we reached the encampment of General Wayne, at a place called Hobson's Choice, now a part of the City of Cincinnati. I have no distinct recollection of the appearance of the Ohio River in the course of our descent, except that, instead of being enlivened by towns and farms along its banks, it was a woody wilderness, shut in to the water's edge. Excepting the openings and clearings made for the camp, the ground was covered by lofty trees and entangled vines.

We remained here but a few days, when we floated off again into the stream; our party now consisted of my guardian (as I will call him) and another man, and a little boy about my own age. We now proceeded as silently as we could, keeping, as near as possible, on the Kentucky side of the river, from apprehension of the Indians.

I do not remember Louisville, or "the Falls" as the place was then called; the waters being high, the rapids were probably not visible, and the boat passed over them as over any other part of the river From this place to the mouth of the river, about five hundred miles, the banks presented an uninterrupted wilderness; the solitude was not disturbed by a single

human voice out of our boat. We encountered a river storm, not many miles from the Mississippi; the waves tossed us about, and dashed over the sides of the boat, threatening either to overwhelm us, or to cast us on a desert shore. What a contrast to the gentle Ohio was presented when we entered the current of the mighty "father of rivers," with his prodigious volume rolling in turbid eddies and whirls, with whole forests of driftwood on his surface! We were swiftly hurried along, and soon reached New Madrid, the termination of our voyage. This place was then a small Spanish military post; as we approached the landing, a soldier or officer made his appearance on the bank, and flourished his sword with a fierce, consequential air; all this for the purpose of indicating the place for us to land.



A TOLL GATE.

39. A Bear Fight

By Henry M. Brackenridge (1834)

In ascending the Ohio, as the banks were uninhabited, and there were no boats going down, we often suffered severely from the want of provisions. Louisville. Excepting two log-cabins, at Red Bank, there was no habitation until we reached the Falls. I shall never forget the painful sensations of hunger which I endured, when we were a day, or sometimes two days, without anything to eat. A sufficient supply of provisions had not been laid in before starting, and our hunters frequently disappointed us. Not far from the Wabash, on the Indian side of the river, a small herd of buffaloes was one day observed, perhaps among the last ever seen on the banks of the Ohio. Our boat landed, in order to afford an opportunity to those who had guns to approach the game through the woods. Four of the men slipped up through the bushes, and, selecting a buffalo bull, fired their rifles at once at his head; but they either missed, or their bullets could not penetrate his skull. Another was more fortunate, or more judicious, in choosing out a large calf, which he shot and secured, and brought us a most acceptable supply of fresh meat.

Once, having encamped somewhat later than usual, in the neighborhood of a beautiful grove of sugar-trees, we found, after kindling our fires, that a large flock of turkeys had taken up their night's lodgings over our heads: some ten or twelve of them were soon taken down for our supper and breakfast. But it was not often we were so fortunate; and one afternoon in particular, after having suffered much from

hunger, the men bethought themselves of trying the river mussels: they were fried, and covered with pepper and salt, but they could not be eaten.

I must not omit an incident of our voyage of somewhat unusual interest, which was nothing more nor less than what may be called a naval combat with a bear. One afternoon bruin was espied crossing the river from the Indiana to the Kentucky side; every exertion was made, and with success, to cut him off from the shore. We now had him fairly in the middle of the river. All the guns we had on board were leveled at him; but such is the extraordinary tenacity of life in this animal, that, although severely wounded, he not only continued to swim, but now enraged, and finding his retreat impracticable, made directly for the boat, champing his teeth, and his eyes red with rage. Before the fire-arms could be reloaded, he laid his paw on the side of the boat, as if to try the last desperate experiment of boarding; and if he had succeeded, the probability is he would have cleared the decks. Some one had the presence of mind to seize an axe and knock him in the head; after which, he was dragged into the boat, and proved to be of enormous size. We encamped early, and fires were joyfully kindled along the rocky shore, in anticipation of the feast: one of the paws fell to my share, and, being roasted in the ashes, furnished a delicious repast.

Our boat was very badly contrived to encounter inclement weather. At the stern there was a small cabin, if such it might be called, formed by a canvas drawn over hoops something like those of a covered wagon. But the space it covered was too narrow to shelter more than four or five persons. The hull of the boat was entirely filled with peltries. One night,

when it rained incessantly, so many crowded in that I was fairly crowded out, and lay, until daylight, on the running-board (a plank at the edge of the boat, on which the men walk in pushing with the pole), exposed to the falling torrents of rain, accompanied with incessant thunder and lightning. We little know what we can bear until we try, although one might think this would deserve to rank among the experiments of Peter the Great, who attempted to accustom his midshipmen to drink salt water! I did not sleep, but drew myself as nearly into the shape of a ball as I could, with no other covering than a thin capote. Shortly after my arrival at Louisville, I was seized with a fever and ague, occasioned either by my exposures and sufferings, or by imprudently eating some unripe watermelon, or both together. It was nearly a year before I was entirely cured of the ague, and I felt the effects long after.

Capote = a long cloak.

My guardian, having disposed of the principal part of his cargo at Louisville, purchased a canoe or peroque, which he loaded with some valuable furs remaining unsold, and employed a stripling from the Monongahela to assist him in pushing with the pole. Thus far, I have said little of my guardian. The reader must have discovered that he was engaged in trade between Pittsburg and Upper Louisiana; but he will hardly suspect that he was a French gentleman of education, and bred to the bar in his own country, and of a distinguished family there. He might now be seen, pole in hand, pushing at the stern, and his man Duncan at the bow, while Pill-garlick was deposited among the skins, half way between them. When the unfortunate ague came on I disturbed the equilibrium of the canoe, or rather of those

standing up in it, to the no small displeasure of monsieur, whose temper was none of the sweetest.

As the season was advanced, and also rainy, I suffered much from constant exposure. Duncan took care of me; we slept together, and the few blankets we had were disposed in the most judicious manner. One of these was drawn over bent twigs, each end in the ground; another was laid on leaves, or fresh boughs, and a third was used for covering. In this way, the night was passed more comfortably than the day; although, on one occasion, we had to shake off the snow which had fallen upon us somewhat early in the season. Having a regular return of the ague every day, and growing weaker, my guardian considered it most prudent to leave me at the first settlement, where I could be safely deposited and taken care of. Accordingly, on our arrival at Gallipolis, I was taken to a house in the village and left there.

40. A Wise Old Mule

By Edwin Bryant (1846)

About midway upwards, in a cañon of this mountain, I noticed the smoke of a fire, which apparently had just been kindled by the Indians, who were then there, and had discovered our party on the white plain below; it was the custom of these Indians to make signals by fire and smoke, whenever they notice strange objects. Proceeding onward, I overtook an old and favorite pack-mule, which we familiarly called "Old Jenny." She carried our meat and flour — all that we possessed in fact — as a suste-

nance of life. Her pack had turned, and her burden, instead of being on her back was suspended underneath. With that sagacity and discretion so characteristic of the Mexican pack-mule, as she was behind and followed the party in advance, she had stopped short in the road until some one should come to rearrange her cargo and place it on deck instead of under the keel. I dismounted and went through, by myself, the rather tedious and laborious process of unpacking and repacking. This done, "Old Jenny" set forward upon a fast gallop to overtake her companions ahead, and my own mule, as if not to be outdone in the race, followed in the same gait. "Old Jenny," however, maintained the honors of the race, keeping considerably ahead. Both of them, by that instinct or faculty which mules undoubtedly possess, had scented the water on the other side of the valley, and their pangs of extreme thirst urged them forward at this extraordinary speed, after the long and laborious march they had made.

As I advanced over the plain the spreading of the fires in the cañon of the mountain appeared with great distinctness. The line of lights was regular like camp-fires, and I was more than half inclined to hope that we should meet and be welcomed by an encampment of civilized men — either hunters, or a party from the Pacific bound homeward. The moon shone out about nine o'clock, displaying and illuminating the unnatural, unearthly dreariness of the scenery.

"Old Jenny" for some time had so far beat me in the race as to be out of my sight, and I out of the sound of her footsteps. I was entirely alone, and enjoying, as well as a man could with a crust of salt

in his nostrils and over his lips, and a husky mouth and throat, the singularity of my situation, when I observed, about a quarter of a mile in advance of me, a dark, stationary object standing in the midst of the hoary scenery. I supposed it to be "Old Jenny" in trouble once more about her pack. But coming up to a speaking distance, I was challenged in a loud voice with the usual guard-salutation, "Who comes there?" Having no countersign, I gave the common response in such cases, "A friend." This appeared to be satisfactory, for I heard no report of pistol or rifle, and no arrow took its soundless flight through my body. I rode up to the object and discovered it to be Buchanan sitting upon his mule, which had become so much exhausted that it occasionally refused to go along. He said that he had supposed himself to be the "last man," before "Old Jenny" passed, who had given him a surprise, and he was quite thunderstruck when an animal, mounted by a man, came charging upon him in his half-crippled condition. After a good laugh and some little delay and difficulty, we got his mule under way again, and rode slowly along together.

We left, what seemed to us, in our tired condition, the interminable plain of salt, and entered upon the sagey slope of the mountain about ten o'clock. Hallooing as loudly as we could raise our voices, we obtained, by a response, the direction of our party who had preceded us, and after some difficulty in making our way through the sage, grass, and willows, (the last a certain indication of water in the desert,) we came to where they had discovered a faint stream of water, and made their camp. Men and mules, on their first arrival, as we learned, had madly rushed into the

stream and drank together of its muddy waters, — made muddy by their own disturbance of its shallow channel and sluggish current.

Delay of gratification frequently gives a temporary relief to the cravings of hunger. The same remark is applicable to thirst. Some hours previously I had felt the pangs of thirst with an acuteness almost amounting to an agony. Now, when I had reached the spot where I could gratify my desires in this respect, they were greatly diminished. My first care was to unsaddle my mule and to lead it to the stream, and my next to take a survey of the position of our encampment. I then procured a cup of muddy water, and drank it off with a good relish. The fires before noticed were still blazing brightly above us on the side of the mountain, but those who had lighted them, had given no other signal of their proximity. The moon shone brilliantly, and Jacob, Buchanan, McClary, and myself, concluded we would trace the small stream of water until we could find the fountain spring. After considerable search among the reeds, willow, and luxuriant grass, we discovered a spring. Buchanan was so eager to obtain a draught of cold, pure water, that in dipping his cup for this purpose, the yielding weeds under him gave way, and he sank into the basin, from which he was drawn out after a good ducking, by one of those present. The next morning this basin was sounded to the depth of thirty-five feet, and no bottom found. We named this spring "Buchanan's well."

We lighted no fires to-night, and prepared no evening meal. Worn down by the hard day's travel, after relieving our thirst we spread our blankets upon the ground, and laying our bodies upon them, slept

soundly in the bright moonshine. Several of our party had been on the road upwards of seventeen hours, without water or refreshment of any kind, except a small draught of cold coffee from our powder-keg, made of the salt sulphur-water at our last encampment, and had travelled the distance of seventy-five miles. The Salt Plain has never at this place, so far as I could understand, been crossed but twice previously by civilized men, and in these instances two days were occupied in performing the journey of seventy-five miles.

41. A Mimic Bull Fight

By William Bullock (1825)

The next thing was dancing to a guitar, strummed by a pretty little girl about twelve years old, and some of the ladies accompanied with their voices the movements of their feet. Whilst this amusement was going on, a fine young bull was brought and tied by a long cord to the stump of a tree: the beautiful little animal seemed for a while to enjoy the noisy sport as much as any of the company, till he had received several very marked insults, when he lost his temper, and with considerable violence ran at an Indian, against whom he had already shown marks of hostility. Several persons now joined in the attempt to work him up to the highest point of irritation; the young men advanced in front of him, with only a pocket handkerchief, and when they had provoked him to attack them, would merely step aside, and leave the handkerchief covering his face. The con-

test had continued without any one being endangered, till in a furious charge at his Indian friend, the bull broke the rope; but the sable adversary very dexterously turned short and seized him by the tail, and contrived so to hold him, till another rope was passed round his body, and he was again secured. A soldier next leaped on his back, but after a few efforts, the animal threw him to a considerable distance, and he fell with violence. It now became quite furious, when an Indian sprang upon its back, clasping its sides with his legs, and resisting every effort of the bellowing brute to dislodge him; and then finally galloped off into a wood.

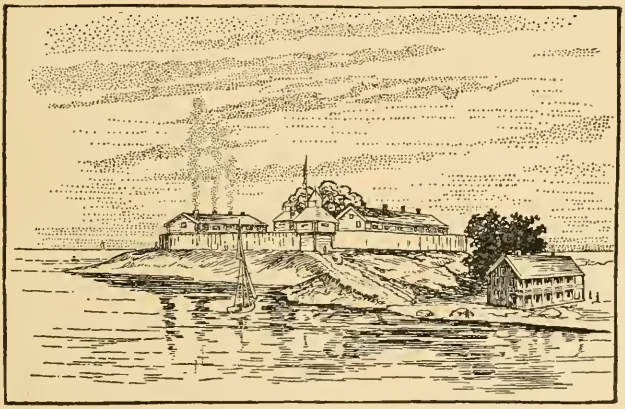
It was the first time I had ever witnessed any thing like a bull-fight, even of this mimic kind; and as the parties did not seem to apprehend any peril, the laughter, in which the ladies had no inconsiderable share, was occasionally very boisterous and long continued.

42. A Storm on Lake Erie

By Isaac Weld (1795)

At daybreak we found ourselves entirely clear of the land; but instead of the azure sky and gentle breezes which had favored us the preceding day, we had thick hazy weather, and every appearance in the heavens indicated that before many hours were over we should have to contend with some of the dangerous storms so frequent on Lake Erie. It was not long before the winds began to blow, and the waves to rise in a tremendous manner. A number of old French ladies, who were going to see their grand-

children in Lower Canada, and who now for the first time in their lives found themselves on the water, occupied the cabin. The hold of the vessel, boarded from end to end, and divided simply by a sail suspended from one of the beams, was filled on one side with steerage passengers, amongst which were several women and children; and on the opposite side with passengers who had paid cabin price, but were unable



AN OLD FORT.

to get any better accommodation, amongst which number was our party. Not including either the old ladies in the cabin, or the steerage passengers, we sat down to dinner each day twenty-six in number. The greater part of the passengers, drooping under seasickness, begged for heaven's sake that the captain would put back; but bent upon performing his voyage with expedition, he was deaf to their entreaties.

What the earnest entreaties, however, of the passengers could not effect, the storm soon compelled.

It was found absolutely necessary to seek for a place of shelter to avoid its fury; and accordingly the helm was ordered up, and we made the best of our way back again to the islands in a bay, between two of which we cast anchor. Here we lay securely sheltered by the land until the next morning, when the watch upon deck gave the alarm that the vessel was driving from her anchor and going fast towards the shore.

The dawn of day only enabled us to see all the danger of our situation. We were within one hundred yards of a rocky lee shore, and depended upon one anchor, which, if the gale increased, the captain feared very much would not hold. The day was wet and squally and the appearance of the sky gave us every reason to imagine that the weather, instead of growing moderate, would become still more tempestuous than it either was or had been; nevertheless, buoyed up by hope, and by a good share of animal spirits, we ate our breakfasts regardless of the impending danger, and afterwards sat down to a game of cards. Scarcely had we played for one hour when the dismal cry was heard of, "All hands aloft," as the vessel was again drifting towards the shore.

As the day was very cold, I threw a blanket over my shoulders, and fastened it round my waist with a girdle, in the Indian fashion, but I was incapable of managing it like an Indian, and stopped to disencumber myself of it before I went on deck, so that, as it happened, I was the last man below. The readiest way of going up was through the hatchway, and I had just got my foot upon the ladder, in order to ascend, when the vessel struck with great force upon the rocks. Before two minutes had passed over, the

vessel struck a second time, but with a still greater shock; and at the end of a quarter of an hour, during which period she had gradually approached nearer towards the shore, she began to strike with the fall of every wave. As the storm increased, the waves began to roll with greater turbulence than before; and with such impetuosity did they break over the bows of the vessel, that it was with the very utmost difficulty that I, and half a dozen more who had taken our station on the forecastle, could hold by our hands fast enough to save ourselves from being carried overboard.

For upwards of four hours did we remain in this situation, expecting every instant that the vessel would go to pieces, and exposed every three or four minutes to the shock of one of the tremendous breakers which came rolling towards us. At last, we were so benumbed with cold that it would have been impossible for us to make any exertions in the water to save ourselves if the vessel was wrecked; so we determined to go below, there to remain until we should be again forced up by the waves.

Some of the passengers now began to write their wills on scraps of paper, and to inclose them in what they imagined would be most likely to preserve them from the water; others had begun to take from their trunks what they deemed most valuable; and one unfortunate thoughtless man, who was moving with his family from the upper country, we discovered in the very act of loading himself with dollars from head to foot, so that had he fallen into the water in the state we found him he must inevitably have been carried to the bottom.

Words can convey no idea of the wildness that

reigned in the countenance of almost every person as the night approached.

Till nine o'clock at night the vessel kept striking every minute, during which time we were kept in a state of the most dreadful suspense about our fate; but then happily the wind shifted one or two points in our favour, which occasioned the vessel to roll instead of striking. At midnight the gale grew somewhat more moderate; and at three in the morning it was so far abated, that the men were able to haul in the anchor, and in a short time to bring the vessel once more into deep water, and out of all danger. Great was the joy, as well may be imagined, which this circumstance diffused amongst the passengers; and well pleased was each one, after the fatigue and anxiety of the preceding day, to think he might securely lay himself down to rest.

The next morning the sun arose in all his majesty from behind one of the most distant islands. The azure sky was unobscured by a single cloud, the air felt serenely mild, and the birds, as if equally delighted with man that the storm was over, sweetly warbled forth their songs in the adjacent woods; in short, had it not been for the disordered condition in which we saw our vessel, and every thing belonging to us, the perils we had gone through would have appeared like a dream.

43. In a Cave

By John Ashe (1806)

I had descended but twenty-two miles from the Wabash when I came to on the Indiana shore to

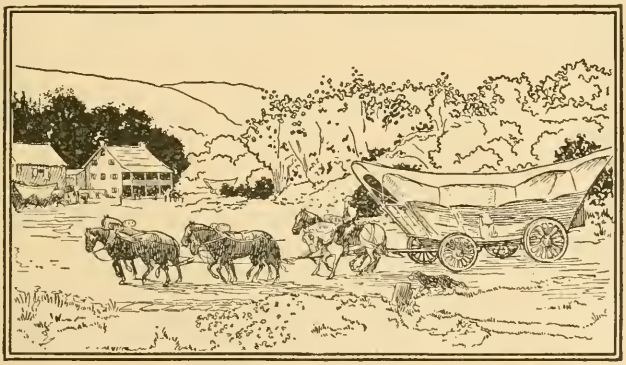
examine a very grand and interesting natural curiosity. It is a cave in a rock which presents itself to view a little above the water when high, close to the bank of the river, and darkened by the shade of some Catalpa trees standing before the entrance. On each side the gently ascending copses of wood, and the extensive view of the water, profound, wide and transparent, tend to render the cave an object truly delightful and worthy of the most minute attention. I resolved to explore it, though it bore the reputation of being the residence of a band of robbers who for many years have infested the river. But I find the cavern at first became an object of terror and astonishment from having been the retreat of the remains of an Indian nation who were exasperated against the Americans, and resolved to put as many of them as possible to death, to revenge the injuries and insults they and their friends had experienced.

It was a party of the Illinois who adopted this fatal resolution, and who carried it on for several years with the most bloody effect, till a large party of Kentuckians resolved to attack and exterminate them. With this intent fifty well armed men descended to the cave and attacked the Illinois who were double that number. Several fell on both sides, and the victory was doubtful till the Illinois rushed upon the enemy with lifted tomahawks and horrid cries, and drove them to the cave which they entered, and made a long and terrible resistance. In an instant the Illinois changed their mode: they cast up a heap of dry wood, reeds and cane, immediately before the entrance which they undoubtedly guarded, and set fire to the piles; this suffocated all those who had not resolution to rush through the flame and brave death

in another effort with their successful enemy. Some had vigour to make this desperate attempt. It was fruitless. The life of one man alone was spared. The rest perished by the fire, or fell under the hatchet. The man, whose life was given him, was sent back to the Government of Kentucky with this message: "Tell your wise men, that the Illinois have glutted their vengeance, and that their spirit is satisfied and appeased. On the borders of the lake we will bury the hatchet. Woe to those who make us take it from the ground." Soon after this act they departed, and reside to this time on the spot they mentioned for their intended retreat.

About three years after this distinguished act of national and Indian vengeance, the cave was seized by a party of Kentuckians, called "Wilson's Gang." Wilson, in the first instance, brought his family to the cave, fitted it up as a spacious dwelling, and erected a sign post on the water side, on which were these words: "Wilson's house for entertainment." The novelty of such a tavern induced almost all boats descending the river to call and stop for refreshment and amusement. Attracted by these circumstances, several idle characters took up their abode at the cave. Out of such customers as these Wilson found no difficulty in forming a band of robbers, with whom he formed the plan of murdering the crews of every boat that stopped at his tavern, and send the boats, manned by some of his party, to New Orleans, and there sell their lading for cash, which was to be conveyed to the cave by land through the states of Tennessee and Kentucky; the party who returned with it were instructed to murder and rob, on all good occasions, presented by the road. After a lapse of

some time, the merchants of the upper country began to be alarmed, when they found that their property made no return, and their people never came back. Several families and respectable men who had gone down the river were never more heard of, and the losses became so frequent that it raised at length a cry of individual and general distress. This naturally led to inquiry, and large rewards were offered for the discovery of the perpetrators of such unparalleled crimes.



THE CONESTOGA WAGON.

It soon came out that Wilson, with an organized party of forty-five men, was the cause of such waste of blood and treasure. The publicity of Wilson's transactions soon broke up his party; some dispersed, others were taken prisoners, and he himself was killed by one of his associates, who was tempted by the original reward offered for the head of the captain of the gang.

I ordered light and arms, and entered the cave, and found it to measure two hundred feet long, and forty

feet high: the entrance formed a semicircular arch of ninety feet at its base, and forty-five in its perpendicular. The interior walls are smooth rock stained by fire and marked with names of persons and dates and other remarks, etched by former inhabitants and by nearly every visitor. The floor is very remarkable; it is level through the whole length of its centre, and rises to the sides in stone grades, in the manner of seats in the pit of a theatre. On a diligent scrutiny of the walls, I could plainly discern that the Indians, at a very remote period, made use of the cave as a house of deliberation and council. The walls bear many hieroglyphics, well executed in the Indian manner: and some of them represented animals which bear no resemblance to any I have ever heard of or seen.

While occupied in this research, I discovered an opening in the roof of the cave, which appeared to work up a funnel to the surface of the earth. It was as large as an ordinary chimney, and placed directly in the centre of the roof. The access was very difficult, and yet an increase of curiosity determined me to find out whither the passage led. In consequence I ordered a long hickory tree to be cut down, to be notched for the feet, and reared up against the mouth of the opening. My men seemed to think the passage might lead to the lurking place of a bandit. They were much alarmed and used every persuasion to turn me from my design. It was to no purpose. With a dirk at my breast, and a pair of pistols in my girdle, I mounted by means of the tree, and received a light from my servant, who insisted on following me, while Cuff remained as a sentinel below, ready to fire a signal on any person's approach.

With much difficulty I strained through the aperture, which appeared to form a perpendicular passage of fourteen feet; and to my great astonishment arrived in an apartment of greater magnitude than that from which I had ascended, and of more splendor, magnificence and variety. As I advanced, by the assistance of the lights, I began to discover the outlines of a large vault of great height and extent. The roof, which was arched, the sides and natural pillars that supported it, seemed at first sight to be cut out and wrought into figures and ornaments, not unlike those of a gothic cathedral. These were formed by a thousand droppings of the coldest and most petrifying water. At the farther end of this large vault was an opening, which served as a descent to another vault of very great depth, as I judged from a stone cast in, whose reverberation was not returned for the space of several seconds.

About half an hour later I fired a pistol off, which I knew would bring my faithful Mandanean, but I did not know that its effect would be terrific and its report tremendous. No thunder could exceed the explosion, no echo return so strong a voice. My man fell as if insensible at my feet, and I staggered several paces before I could recover my equilibrium. The light extinguished; the echo of the shot again rebounded, and all the demons of the place awoke at once to appal and confound me. Owls screamed in their retreats, bats fluttered through the air, and a direful contention of sounds and cries vied with each other to scare the heart and fill the soul with horror and dismay. Before the tumult ceased, I discovered beams of light issuing from the lower cave, and in a moment after appeared my trusty Indian rising

through the opening with a torch in one hand and a sabre in the other, and exclaiming, "My chief, my chief, have a strong heart." We found here abundance of shells of the mussel kind. They were all open and lay scattered on the floor and shelving sides of the cave, in a manner that fully convinced me they were there originally inhabited by fish, at a period when the place in which I found them was a submarine vault.

44. What became of the Buffaloes

By John Ashe (1806)

An old man, one of the first settlers in this country, built his log-house on the immediate borders of a salt spring. He informed me that for the first several seasons, the buffaloes paid him their visits with the utmost regularity. They travelled in single files, always following each other at equal distances, and formed droves on their arrival, of about three hundred each. The first and second years, so unacquainted were these poor brutes with the use of this man's house or with his nature, that in a few hours they rubbed the house completely down; taking delight in turning the logs off with their horns, while he had some difficulty to escape from being trampled under their feet, or crushed to death in his own ruins. At that period he supposed there could not have been less than ten thousand in the neighbourhood of the spring. They sought for no manner of food; but only bathed and drank three or four times a day, and rolled in the earth, or lay in the adjacent shades; and on the fifth and sixth days separated into dis-

tinct droves, bathed, drank and departed in single files, according to the exact order of their arrival. They all rolled successively in the same hole; and each thus carried away a coat of mud, to preserve the moisture on their skin; when hardened and baked by the sun, this layer would resist the stings of millions of insects that otherwise would persecute these peaceful travellers to madness or death.

In the first and second years this old man with some companions killed from six to seven hundred of these noble creatures, merely for the sake of the skins, which were worth only two shillings each; and after this work of death, they were obliged to leave the place till the following season. In the two following years, the same persons killed great numbers out of the first droves that arrived; but they soon had reason to repent of this, for the remaining droves, as they came up in succession, stopped, moaned or lowed aloud, and returned instantly to the wilderness in an unusual run, without tasting their favourite spring, or licking the salt earth, which was also once their most agreeable occupation; nor did they, or any of their race, ever revisit the neighbourhood.

The same destruction has gone on since 1870 in the western plain.

The simple history of this spring is that of every other in the settled part of this western world; the carnage of beasts was everywhere the same. I met with a man who had killed two thousand buffaloes with his own hand; and others, no doubt, have done the same. In consequence of such proceedings, not one buffalo is at this time to be found east of the Mississippi, except a few domesticated by the curious, or carried through the country as a public show. The first settlers, not content with this sanguinary

extermination of the animal, also destroyed the food to which it was most partial; which was cane, growing in forests and brakes of immeasurable extent. To this the unsparing wretches set fire in dry seasons, in order to drive out every living creature, and then hunt and persecute them to death.

Deer, which also abounded in this country, have nearly shared the same fate as the buffalo; and they, too, would be entirely annihilated, if they were not capable of subsisting in places almost inaccessible to man. The small number that remain, frequent the mountains; their desire for the water of the saline springs, however, occasionally brings them into the plains, where they do not want for enemies, for there is no settler who would not abandon the most important business, in order to pursue this species of game.

The salt lake and springs are also frequented by other kinds of beasts, and by birds: and from the most minute inquiries, I am justified in asserting that their visitations were periodical; except doves, which appear to delight in the neighbourhood of salt springs, and to make them their constant abode. In such situations they are seen in immense numbers, as tame as domestic pigeons, but rendered more interesting by their solitary notes and plaintive melody.

45. A Deer Hunt in Florida

By George McCall (1822)

Pensacola, December 1, 1822.

My dear Harry: —

I am mounted at last — and splendidly. I found here a short time ago a blooded mare from Virginia;

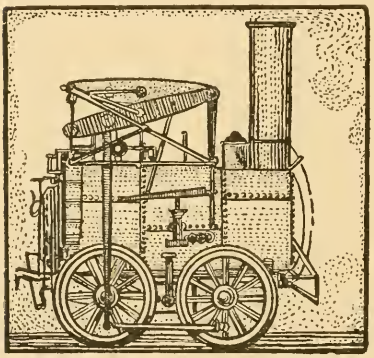
she was brought hither through Tennessee and Alabama by a Mr. Anderson, a gentleman who came to look at Florida lands and live-oak timber. Kate, as I have christened her, is a dark bay, almost a brown, with the most beautiful head, saucily set upon a fine neck, which springs proudly from a deep and well thrown-back shoulder; a short back, fiddle hips, and a clean set of limbs finish the portrait. She has a fair share of woman's wilfulness; but that is amply illuminated or adorned by a light pair of heels and great powers of endurance. I have ridden her after the hounds several times. A party was made up this week. The day appointed for the hunt was an uncommon one for the time of year, though not the less welcome than unexpected.

We mustered eight dogs and moved on through the woods, where the long-leaved pine, sparsely distributed, towers up among the red and the white palmetto. At length we came upon the hunting-ground, and Jupiter was ordered with the pack to drive a branch or arm of the bayou that shot out from the main body of the hummock. He had not advanced far before a single note, low, deep-toned, and prolonged, brought glad tidings and true to the ears of his master.

"Hark to him!" cried the Captain. "Listen to old Enoch; that was his voice, and it is a voice that never deceives. He has struck a cold trail and carefully and truly will the old fellow follow it. Hark again! another note; he will soon track the deer to his lair, and rouse him from his noon-day repose. We must separate, and be ready for him when the dogs force him from cover."

Old Enoch continued his course slowly and accu-

rately, from time to time giving notice of his progress; when all at once the whole pack, bursting into full cry, proclaimed that the deer was up. Each horseman concealed himself and horse as much as possible behind a tree or bush, and waited in silence and anxious expectancy for the moment when the deer, on being closely pressed, should leave the hummock. In a few minutes, however, Bell, having listened attentively to the cry, put spurs to his mare, dashed down the branch to its junction with the bayou, threw the reins on his mare's neck, and sat loosely in the saddle, prepared to deliver his fire at the first bound of the deer from cover. His judgment proved to be correct: the boisterous cry of the pack passed, successively, each of the disappointed hunters stationed above; but as the deer approached the junction, he caught the wind of his enemy, and declined to leave the cover; and the cry of the pack soon proved that he had directed his flight up the main bayou. As Bell rode back, he called out,



AN EARLY LOCOMOTIVE.

"This fellow is disposed to breathe our horses. We are entered for a good mile race by this manœuvre. The stand is the first cove above this branch; if we let him pass that, he is safe for the day. Come on." An animated whoop started us at full speed, and in another

moment we were sweeping through the rattling palmettos with the sound of a hurricane. Stands were taken as the judgment of the individual dictated, and scarcely were we disposed of, ere the chase came thundering on. Again we were disappointed; the deer, having approached to the very edge of the hummock, again caught the wind of his pursuers, and doubling back, returned in the same trail he had advanced upon.

The pack came dashing out above almost as the buck went in again to the hummock below: they circled round where the deer had doubled, and without for a moment faltering followed him back again. The cry of the pack soon told that the buck as he regained the cover had dashed through to the banks of the bayou, where plunging in he swam the stream and hied him off to the northward.

A few hundred yards farther brought us through the thicket, and we at once came upon a large savannah. When we entered upon the opening, Bell cast his eye down the bayou and discovered the buck coming up on the opposite side of the savannah, steadily pursued by the dogs, (though at some distance,) whence they sent forward the intelligence of their coming in deep-toned and eager cries. The poor buck, nearly exhausted with the long and uninterrupted run, was laboring under the weight of his branching antlers; his parched tongue lolled from his husky throat.

The Captain, at a glance, perceived his condition, and called out to me, "We can take him as he passes the head of the pond."

Again putting spurs to our horses, we gained the head of the savannah in advance of him. On reach-

ing the savannah, the buck had been compelled to leave the wind, the only medium through which he receives warning of danger in front; for when hotly pursued, his eyesight soon fails him, and his ears are filled with the fearful cry of the hounds in his rear. It followed, then, that when we drew up at the distance of some two hundred yards in his front, he continued his course, unconscious of our presence. The Captain whispered, "The first shot is yours; fire."

I drew up my piece, and fired; but the excitement of the chase, and the fatigue of my bridle-arm, caused my aim to be unsteady, and my bullet cut the leaves from the bushes above his head.

The buck sprang forward at the report, and redoubled his efforts. The white mare now stood statue-like, with ears erect and eyes fixed upon the noble deer still advancing; and before the fated patriarch of the wilds had made two leaps, the Captain's piece rang forth his death-knell. The buck made one tremendous leap; staggered forward a few yards in quick, irregular plunges; recovered himself; and then, expending the remaining energies of vitality in one majestic bound, fell lifeless on the plain.

46. Alligators

By George McCall (1830)

The weather is now delightful, though quite warm at mid-day. The alligators, who have lain torpid all winter, packed away in their dens in the river-banks, have come abroad to enjoy the genial sunshine, and to commit havoc on all animals who venture into the water which they inhabit. The Colonel lost a very

fine Northern cow a few days ago by one of these monsters. She had waded into the river by the side of the wharf just about daylight or soon after, and, although almost under the eye of the sentinel, was seized, terribly lacerated and dragged under water. Another officer lost a good pony much in the same way; he had waded into the water at noon to drink and cool his flanks, when he was caught by the hock and completely hamstrung. After suffering under such depredations, orders were given, as you may well suppose, that the sentinel posted at the wharf should fire upon every alligator that showed his nose above water. In this way quite a number have been killed.

I will give you my experience in one or two cases occurring under my own eyes. In the first place, I must tell you that a short time since, being on duty as officer of the day, I made the round of visiting the different guards and sentinels, the last inspected being at the subsistence stores, in front of which is the wharf. I observed several officers seated under a large live-oak, just below the store-houses. Here, at ten o'clock in the morning, they were enjoying the refreshing sea-breeze then coming over the placid bay. I joined them with a glad appreciation of the shade and the delicious air so welcome after an hour's walk under a hot sun.

I had not been many minutes in conversation with these gentlemen, when the top of an alligator's skull, his cold, hard, unmeaning eye, and the tip of his nose, all that he usually shows above water as he reconnoitres "the land ahead," appeared suddenly in the stream, not thirty yards from the sentinel's post. The latter happened to be a man of my own com-

pany, who was, I knew, a crack shot. I gave him a signal to fire. Without an instant's pause, he brought his musket to his shoulder and made a "snap-shot." The huge creature sprung half out of water, and falling upon his back, lashed the water with his tail. This was apparently a large fellow, and I directed two of the guard, who were standing by as spectators, to take a canoe that lay at the wharf, and bring the reptile ashore. He was dragged up near to the tree under which we sat, and measured thirteen feet.

As I wanted a good tooth from which to fashion a powder-charger for my rifle, I sent for an axe. With this the man struck two heavy blows, driving the edge of the axe up to the eye into the animal's skull, destroying, as one would think, all the brain, if any there was left after the shock produced by the musket-ball, which had passed entirely through it.

While we still sat under the oak, perhaps half an hour after the alligator had undergone the operation so thoroughly performed by the axe-man, we were not a little surprised to see the fellow, who lay with his head turned from the water, rise upon his feet, wheel completely round, and walk directly into the water, a distance of about ten feet. He made his way through the bulrushes, at least ten feet more, until he reached a depth that brought the water to the top of his back, and there he lay, I presume, until the high tide floated him off, for he had not moved when the call of "Roast-beef" upon the drum and fife summoned us to dinner, at one o'clock.

Another instance is a rather comical one that happened to myself. I had been out to ride, one morning, with Lieutenant Alexander, when, in returning, we saw in the road in front of us, at the distance of

a couple of hundred yards from the guard-house, an alligator about seven feet in length. He had come from the river, and was crossing the road to a pond near by. As we drew up for a moment to look at him, I happened to see lying by the road-side a pine pole of some ten feet long, and as thick as my arm, that had fallen from a passing wagon. This suggested to my mind the idea of having a little encounter with the fellow, with a view to capture him if I could. Accordingly I dismounted, and giving the reins to Alexander, I seized the pole, which was quite as much as I could manage with both hands.

As I approached Mr. Alligator, swinging the pole in quite a threatening attitude around my head, he showed no disposition to back out; but, on the contrary, he at once faced me and advanced boldly with head erect, and hissing like forty geese. I stopped to receive him, and as he came within reach, I brought the pine pole down upon his head with all the force I was master of. This neither appalled him nor checked his advance, and he continued his charge, slowly to be sure, but with great determination, still uttering his hissing defiance, and totally regardless of the heavy blows I continued to pile upon his head. I was compelled to move backwards to keep out of reach of his open jaws, but I continued to hammer him well over the head all the time.

At length my perseverance and the weight of the pine pole brought his head to the ground. I then took hold of the end of his tail with my left hand, and mounting my horse dragged my victim into the garrison. Having arrived at my quarters, I hitched my horse to the ring in a large live-oak in front, and leaving the alligator where he lay by the side of the

horse, I entered my sitting-room where the company clerk was engaged in making out some returns.

While standing at the table looking at his work, a loud shout and a merry laugh from the parade-ground called me to the door. Here I beheld my friend, Master Alligator, with head up, marching with great dignity across the parade-ground toward the soldiers' barracks, while the men were collecting round him in high glee. Being much interested in my returns to be sent to Washington by the vessel now looked for, I resumed my work and heard no more of the alligator. He of course was only stunned by the hammering he had received, but many of the blows I gave him would singly have killed a horse.

PART IV

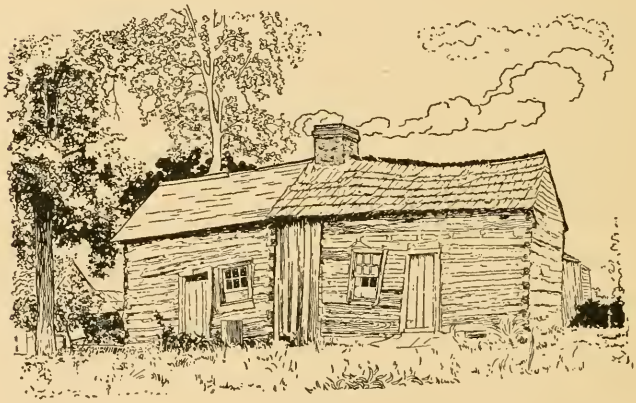
OUT WEST

47. Building a Log Cabin

By a Pioneer (1822)

In building our cabin it was set north and south; my brother used my father's pocket compass on the occasion, for we had no idea of living in a house that did not stand square with the earth itself. This showed our ignorance of the comforts and conveniences of a pioneer life. The position of the house, end to the hill, necessarily elevated the lower end, and the determination to have both a north and south door, added much to the airiness of the house, particularly after the green ash puncheons had shrunk so as to leave cracks in the floor and doors from one to two inches wide. At both the doors we had high, unsteady, and sometimes icy steps, made by piling up the logs cut out of the wall. We had a window, if it could be called a window, when, perhaps, it was the largest spot in the top, bottom, or sides of the cabin at which the wind could not enter. It was made by sawing out a log, and placing sticks across; and then, by pasting an old newspaper over the hole, and applying some hog's lard, we had a kind of glazing which shed a most beautiful and mellow light across the cabin when the sun shone on it. All other light entered at the doors, cracks, and chimney.

Our cabin was twenty-four feet by eighteen. The west end was occupied by two beds, the centre of each side by a door, and here our symmetry had to stop, for on the side opposite the window were our shelves, made of clapboards, supported on pins driven into the logs. Upon these shelves my sister displayed, in ample order, a host of pewter plates, basins, dishes, and spoons, scoured and bright. It was none of your new-fangled pewter made of lead, but the best of



A LOG CABIN.

London pewter, which our father himself bought of the manufacturer. These were the plates upon which you could hold your meat so as to cut it without slipping and without dulling your knife. But, alas! the days of pewter plates and sharp dinner knives have passed away.

To return to our internal arrangements. A ladder of five rounds occupied the corner near the window. By this, when we got a floor above, we could ascend.

Our chimney occupied most of the east end; there were pots and kettles opposite the window under the shelves, a gun on hooks over the north door, four split-bottom chairs, three three-legged stools, and a small eight by ten looking-glass sloped from the wall over a large towel and combcase. Our list of furniture was increased by a clumsy shovel and a pair of tongs, made with one shank straight, which was a certain source of pinches and blood blisters. We had also a spinning-wheel and such things as were necessary to work it. It was absolutely necessary to have three-legged stools, as four legs of anything could not all touch the floor at the same time.

The completion of our cabin went on slowly. The season was inclement, we were weak-handed and weak-pocketed, — in fact laborers were not to be had. We got our chimney up breast high as soon as we could, and got our cabin daubed as high as the joists outside. It never was daubed on the inside, for my sister, who was very nice, could not consent to "live right next to mud." My impression now is, that the window was not constructed till spring, for until the sticks and clay were put on the chimney we could have no need of a window; for the flood of light which always poured into the cabin from the fireplace would have extinguished our paper window, and rendered it as useless as the moon at noonday. We got a floor laid overhead as soon as possible, perhaps in a month; but when finished, the reader will readily conceive of its imperviousness to wind or weather, when we mention that it was laid of loose clapboards split from red oak, the stump of which may be seen beyond the cabin. That tree must have grown in the night, for it was so twisting that each board lay on two diago-

nally opposite corners; and a cat might have shaken every board on our ceiling.

It may be well to inform the unlearned reader that "clapboards" are such lumber as pioneers split throughout; they resemble barrel staves before they are shaved, but are split longer, wider, and thinner; of such our roof and ceiling were composed. "Puncheons" are planks made by splitting logs to about two and a half or three inches in thickness, and hewing them on one or both sides with the broad-axe; of such our floor, doors, tables, and stools were manufactured. The "eave-bearers" are those end logs which project over to receive the butting poles, against which the lower tier of clapboards rest to form the roof. The "trapping" is the roof timbers, composing the gable end and the ribs. The "trap logs" are those of unequal length above the eave-bearers, which form the gable ends, and upon which the ribs rest. The "weight poles" are small logs laid on the roof, which weigh down the course of clapboards on which they lie, and against which the next course above is placed. The "knees" are pieces of heart timber placed above the butting poles, successively, to prevent the weight poles from rolling off.

48. The Bear Tree

By a Pioneer (1820)

Among the first settlers of a new country, there are always found men of great courage. Indeed courage and daring are characteristic of the pioneers of any new region. All know (or ought to know)

before starting for a wilderness, that they will be called to encounter great dangers and difficulties. There is, however, a kind of venturous daring peculiar to the first settlers of a new country, such as General Putnam showed when he ventured into the wolf's den, at the time of the first settlement of Pomfret, Connecticut.

A case of as great risk, intrepidity, and danger, took place at Greensburgh, Trumbull County, Ohio, soon after the commencement of the settlement at that place. In December, 1820, a man named Ichabod Merritt, with two other companions (one of whom had been a sailor) went upon a hunting trip, and came upon the track of a full grown bear. There was a light snow, and after following for a time, they found he had ascended a huge white-wood. The tree had been broken off some seventy feet from the ground and they supposed that the bear must have secreted himself within its hollow at the top.

Unwilling to lose their game, and ready for any daring enterprise, they looked about for ways and means to accomplish their object. They first proposed cutting the tree down; but they had only one axe, and that a dull one, and the tree was sound at the root and not less than eighteen feet in circumference. They could not cut it down before sunset, and if left over night the bear would escape. The sailor proposed that if a smaller tree could be felled and lodged against the large one, he would climb it to the top and shoot the bear. A beech tree was therefore cut and lodged accordingly. The sailor, who had often ascended the waving mast, had now a chance to show his intrepidity upon a forest tree.

Now he began to think how dangerous would be

his perch, should he succeed in gaining the top and miss his first shot. The enraged bear would undoubtedly claim the premises, especially should it be a she bear with her cubs; she would doubtless claim her right and title to that elevated position, and might have the best of the battle. In this case all would agree that the bear would have a choice of location and the advantage of position. In the struggle, too, the beech might be dislodged from the white-wood, and the sailor would either fall with it to the ground, or be left at the top of the tree. The first would be certain death, and the other would not be amusing.

These were solemn thoughts for the sailor, and they weakened his nerve, so that when he attempted to climb, he could not ascend, after repeatedly trying, an inch farther than his companions could push him.

Merritt was so vexed that he told the sailor to come down and let him try what he could do. He then slung his rifle to his hunting belt with the muzzle downwards and began to ascend the beech tree. He succeeded in getting from the topmost branches of the beech upon the limbs of the white-wood just high enough to look over into the hollow. It was dark, and all he could see was a pair of eyes several feet below him. He told his companions, charged them to shoot the bear the moment it came out of the tree, and called on them for protection, if he missed.

Thereupon he fired into the tree, retreated back to the top of the beech and instantly re-loaded. Immediately the bear with two cubs came out of the hollow of the tree: one of the men below fired, but he missed. The cubs took to a limb while the old bear made towards Merritt. She was in a menacing attitude and but a few feet above him when he fired

a second shot. The bear fell, just brushing against him as she went. Another hunter now came up and shot one of the cubs, and Merritt at his leisure re-loaded and shot the other. The hero of this brave hunt made his way down in safety and carried home plenty of meat for his family.

49. The Pioneer's Watchful Dog

By Felix Renick (1842)

At a time when the Indians still occasionally committed depredations on the settlements in the neighborhood of the Virginia town of Clarksburg, Hughs and one of his neighbors had business on the Ohio: they therefore agreed to go together; and, as the saying is, to kill two birds with one stone, for they concluded to make a hunting expedition of it. They set out by a new route, traveled slowly and killed what game they could, leaving the skins to take home with them on their return. On the second or third evening of the trip, they made their camp in time to prepare and eat their supper before nightfall.

Here is a good place to describe the dress and habits of such bold foresters. They always chose a camping-place as near water as convenient, and kindled their fire by the side of the largest suitable log that could be found. Ground was chosen somewhat inclined, so that they might lie with the feet to the fire and the head uphill. The common mode of preparing food, was to sharpen a stick at both ends and stick one end into the ground in front of the fire, with their meat on the other end. The stick and its burden could be turned round, as occasion required,



LEWIS IN INDIAN DRESS.

so as to roast through. Bread, when there was flour to make it of, was either baked under the ashes, or the dough was rolled in long rolls and wound round a stick like that prepared for roasting meat, and managed in the same way.

The pioneer's dress consisted principally of a tow linen shirt and pantaloons, manufactured by wives and daughters. The rest of their dress was nearly all of buckskin, killed with their guns and dressed by their own hands. Their moccasins fitted the foot neatly, and dry oak leaves usually supplied the place of socks or stockings. Above these they wore a pair of buckskin leggins, or gaiters, made to fit the leg and tie in with the moccasins at the ankle; thence extending some distance above the knees, and held by a strap from the hip of the pantaloons. These leggins were a defence against rattlesnakes, briars, and nettles. In cutting the leggins, the surplus left on the outer seam was hung out from one to two inches in width, and was cut into an ornamental fringe. The hunting shirt comes next. It too was made of dressed buckskin, and in the same way ornamented with the fringe down the outside of the arms, around the collar, cape, belt, and skirts, and sometimes down the seams under the arms.

Such was the equipment of the hero of our narrative and his friend. As was customary, they took off their moccasins to dry them. The gaiters and hunting shirt were usually taken off and placed under their owner's head in place of a pillow. A huntsman without a dog would have been considered a fool; accordingly, a dog, faithful and well trained, Hughs and his friend had with them. At dusk they began to make some preparations for lying down, by

unbuttoning their leggins and loosing their belts. Hughs soon discovered that his dog was very restless. He would run out a few steps, snuff and scent the air, and frequently give a low stifled growl.

Hughs' suspicion made him decline undressing any further, and he buckled up his belt again; but, unfortunately, as may be seen from the sequel, he forgot to button the straps of his leggins to the hips of his pantaloons. After watching his dog for some time, he spoke to his friend, and told him that he was afraid there were Indians about. His friend thought it hardly possible, for they had discovered no Indian signs, nor heard the crack of any rifle but their own: he could not believe that they were followed.

This reasoning did not satisfy either Hughs or his dog. Hughs told his friend that they had better leave the camp and watch it from a little distance; if there were Indians about, as he was convinced, they would break on the camp as soon as they supposed the white men had gone to sleep, or in the morning; if he was right in his suspicion, they could kill at least two Indians, and then, perhaps might get off.

Nothing could induce his friend to believe that there was any danger, and he refused to leave the camp. Hughs then told him that he would not leave him alone, but they must sleep on their arms and be ready for anything that might happen. To this his friend agreed. Hughs and his dog had a poor night's rest; and as soon as day began fairly to break, the dog broke out into a furious bark. They both sprang to their feet at the same instant that a volley of rifle shot was poured in upon them. Hughs' friend was killed on the spot, but he himself received no injury

except a bullet or two through his hunting-shirt. He took to his heels with a whole band of Indians close after him; but luckily for him, their guns were empty. At first he out-ran them with ease, but his loosened leggins slipped down about his ankles, and got over his feet and hampered him so much, that the Indians began to gain on him. He must get clear of his leggins or lose his scalp. Straining every nerve, he ran up a ridge and a little beyond the top he stopped, and tore off his leggins. By this time the Indians came up nearly within tomahawk distance of him; relieved of his embarrassment, he again set off at the top of his speed and soon gained a safe distance. As he passed over the top of the next high ridge he gave a loud shout of triumph, well understood by the Indians; for they gave up the chase, and let him make for home at his leisure.

50. A Frontier Neighbour and a Kentucky Conjurer

By James Hall (1835)

The individual alluded to, settled here at a time when there was not a single white man but himself in the vicinity, and here he had resided, with his wife, for a year, without having seen the face of any other human being. Perhaps, as it was his choice to reside in a wilderness, he thought it prudent to conceal his place of abode from the Indians, for he erected his cabin in an inhospitable waste, difficult of access, where there were no pastures to invite the

deer or buffalo, and no game to allure the savage hunter, and where his family remained secure, while he roved with his gun over some hunting ground at a convenient distance.

After passing a year in this mode of life, he wandered one day through the woods in search of game, when he heard the barking of a dog, and supposing that an Indian was near, concealed himself. Presently a small dog came running along his track, with his nose to the ground, as if pursuing his footsteps. It had nearly reached his hiding-place, when it stopped, snuffed the air, and uttered a low whine, as if to warn its master, that the object of pursuit was near at hand. In a few minutes the owner of the dog came stepping cautiously along, glancing his eyes around, and uttering low signals to the dog. But the dog stood at fault, and the owner halted, within a few yards of our hunter, and fully exposed to view.

The new comer was a tall athletic man, completely armed, with rifle, tomahawk, and knife; but whether he was a white man or an Indian, could not be determined, either by his complexion or dress. He wore a hunting shirt and leggins, of dressed deer skin, and a hat from which the rim was entirely torn away, and the crown elongated into the shape of a sugar loaf. His face, feet, and hands, which were exposed, were of the tawny hue of the savage, but whether the colour was natural, or the effect of exposure, could not be ascertained even by the keen eye of the hunter. His features were so disguised by dirt and gunpowder, that their expression afforded no clue, by which could be decided, whether the individual was a friend or a foe.

There was but a moment for deliberation, and after a hasty scrutiny, the pioneer, inclining to the opinion that the stranger was an Indian, cautiously drew up his rifle, and took a deliberate aim; but the bare possibility that he might be pointing his weapon at the bosom of a countryman, induced him to pause. Again he raised his gun, and again hesitated, while his opponent with his rifle half raised towards his face, and his finger on the trigger, looked eagerly around. Both stood motionless and silent, one searching for the object of his pursuit, the other in readiness to fire. At length the hunter, having resolved to delay no longer, cocked his rifle; the tick reached the acute ear of his opponent, who instantly sprung behind a tree. The hunter imitated his example, and they were now fairly opposed, each covered by a tree, from behind which he endeavoured to get a shot at his adversary without exposing his own person. Now a series of stratagems began, each seeking to draw the fire of the other until the stranger, becoming weary of suspense, called out, "Why don't you shoot, you coward?" "Shoot, yourself, you red-skin," retorted the other. "No more a red-skin than yourself." "Are you a white man?" "To be sure I am, are you?" "Yes — no mistake in me." Whereupon each being undeceived, they threw down their guns, rushed together with open arms, and took a hearty hug.

The hunter now learned, that the stranger had been settled, with his family, about ten miles from him, for several months past, and that they had often roamed over the same hunting grounds each supposing himself the sole inhabitant of that region. On the following day the hunter saddled his horse, and

taking up his good wife behind him, carried her down, to make a call upon her new neighbour, who received the visit with joy.

An anecdote is told of Boone, which is highly characteristic of the humour and the coolness of the pioneer. He was once resting in the woods, with a small number of followers, when a large party of Indians came suddenly upon them and halted; neither party had discovered the other until they came in contact. The whites were eating; and the Indians, with the ready tact for which they are famous, sat down with perfect composure and commenced eating also. It was obvious that they wished to lull the suspicions of the white men, and to seize a favourable opportunity for rushing upon them.

Boone affected a careless inattention; but in an under tone, quietly admonished his men to keep their hands upon their rifles. He then strolled towards the Indians, unarmed, and leisurely picking the meat from a bone; the Indian leader, who was similarly employed, rose to meet him. Boone saluted him, and then requested to look at the knife with which the Indian was cutting his meat. The chief handed it to him without hesitation; and our pioneer, who, with his other accomplishments, possessed considerable expertness at sleight of hand, deliberately opened his mouth and affected to swallow the long knife, which, at the same instant, he threw adroitly into his sleeve.

The Indians were astonished; Boone gulped, rubbed his throat, stroked his body, and then, with apparent satisfaction, pronounced the horrid mouthful to be very good. He enjoyed the surprise of the spectators for a few moments, then made another con-

tortion, drew forth the knife, as they supposed, from his body, and civilly returned it to the chief. The latter took the point cautiously between his thumb and finger, as if fearful of being contaminated by touching the weapon, and threw it from him into the bushes. The pioneer sauntered back to his party; and the Indians, instantly despatching their meal, marched off, desiring no farther intercourse with a man who could swallow a scalping-knife.

A singular manœuvre was practised by a party of Indians, who had stolen some horses on Elkhorn, in 1788. They were pursued by a superior number of Americans, for about twenty miles, and overtaken at a spot in a brushy copse of wood where they had halted to rest. The whites came upon them suddenly, and the parties discovered each other simultaneously. The pursuers made preparations to fire; the Indians sprang up from the ground, on which they were sitting, and gave a yell; but, instead of making any show of resistance, ran about as if distracted. One, who was probably the chief, threw himself between the two parties, and continued to scream and jump, dodging from side to side, springing aloft, and throwing his body into violent contortions.

This strange exhibition attracted the attention of the Kentuckians, and prevented them from firing; while the other Indians, gathering up their guns and blankets, disappeared. When the dexterous savage, perceiving that his comrades were so scattered as to be safe from immediate danger, he suddenly threw off his feigned character, dashed into the bushes, and made his escape, leaving a foe superior in numbers, bewildered with amazement at this extemporaneous display of ingenuity.

51. A Bear Hunt in Lake Michigan

By Charles Cleaver (about 1830)

As for Wilson's bear story, it is actually true that he took a large bear in Lake Michigan, or rather out of the lake, northwest of Waukegan. I was going up to Milwaukee at the time, in one of the big steamers, and was sitting reading in the cabin, when the Captain rushed in, evidently very much excited, and snatched his glass from the table. I inquired what was the matter; he said there was something in the lake about two miles ahead, and they could not make out what it was. Of course my book was dropped in a moment, and I hastened after the Captain to the bow of the boat. There I found most of the few passengers on board anxiously trying to make out this strange object. Those used to sailing can form some idea of the commotion caused on board a craft when anything unusual is sighted.

The Captain, after examination by glass, first said it was a horse, then a deer, and, on getting nearer, declared it to be a bear. He decided at once that he would catch him at all hazard, and, on calling for volunteers, found no want of men willing to undertake the task. So the small boat was lowered, with four stalwart sailors at the oars, the mate at the helm, and a man at the bow, with a rope, in which he made a slip-noose. They started for poor Bruin, and when he found that they were after him, he made most excellent time toward the middle of the lake, and for a mile or two led them a splendid race, before they came up

with him. After two or three attempts, the man at the bow threw the fatal noose over his head. Directly the bear found he was caught, he turned and made for the boat, evidently intending to carry the war into the enemy's camp; but they were too quick for him, since they did not like the idea of having a bear for a passenger. They turned and rowed for the steamer with all their might. This brought poor Bruin's nose under the water, and, by the time they reached the steamboat, which had been following pretty close in the wake of the pursuers, he was almost drowned.

The rope was thrown to the deck; we soon hauled him in; and then held a council-of-war as to what should be done with him. It was at first suggested that he should be chained up, and a large chain was brought and put round his neck. Then some ladies came to look at him, and exclaimed, "Oh the horrid great creature! do kill him!" Some person standing by put his hand on the animal's heart and said he was fast recovering, and, if he was not killed, would soon be master of the boat. On which a bevy of female and some male voices, cried out to the Captain to have him killed at once. On a butcher offering to do the job, the Captain consented, and the bear was doomed to have his throat cut and die as ignominious a death as any common porker.

He was a noble fellow, black and tan, seven or eight feet in length, and, when he was skinned, showed such claws and muscles that the volunteers rejoiced that he did not make good his entry into the boat, for he would certainly have driven them into the water if they had escaped his claws and teeth.

It was reported that a farmer drove him into the

lake. On my return to land, two days after, I made several inquiries, and was told he was driven into the lake the evening before; but I always doubted the truth of his swimming in the water all night and half the next day. I am inclined to the opinion that he was driven in that same morning, and, when he found he was watched from the shore, put well out into the lake for safety. It is certain that when first seen by us he was swimming from the shore, and was fully five miles out.

52. Killing a Panther

By Randolph Barnes Marcy (1852)

In the evening, shortly after we had turned out our animals to graze, and had made everything snug and comfortable about us, one of the hunters came into camp and informed us that a panther had crossed the creek but a short distance above, and was coming towards us. This piece of intelligence, as may be supposed, created no little excitement in our quiet circle. Everybody was up in an instant, seized muskets, rifles, or any other weapon that came to hand, and, followed by all the dogs in camp, a very general rush was made towards the spot indicated by the Delaware. On reaching the place, we found where the animal, in stepping from the creek, had left water upon his track; this was not yet dry, and showed that he had passed within a short time. We pointed out the track to several of the dogs, and endeavored, by every means which our ingenuity could suggest, to inspire them with some small degree of that enthusiasm which had animated us. We coaxed, cheered,

and scolded, put their noses into the track, clapped our hands, pointed in the direction of the trail, hissed, and made use of every argument to convince them that there was something of importance on hand; but it was all to no purpose. They did not seem to enter into the spirit of the chase, or to regard the occasion as one in which there was much glory to be derived from following in the footsteps of their illustrious predecessor. On the contrary, the zeal which they showed in starting out from camp, suddenly abated as soon as they came in contact with the track, and it was with very great difficulty that we could prevent them from running away.

At this moment, however, our old bear-dog came up, and no sooner had he caught a snuff of the atmosphere than, suddenly coming to a stop and raising his head into the air, he sent forth one prolonged note and started off in full cry upon the trail. He led off boldly into the timber, followed by the other dogs, who had now recovered confidence, while the men followed at their heels, cheering them on and shouting most vociferously, each one anxious to get the first glimpse of the panther. They soon roused him from his lair, and after making a few circuits around the grove, he took to a tree. I was so fortunate as to reach the spot a little in advance of the party, and gave him a shot which brought him to the ground. The dogs then closed in with him, and others of the party coming up directly afterwards, fired several shots, which took effect and soon placed him "hors du combat." He was a fine specimen of the North American cougar, measuring eight and a half feet from his nose to the extremity of the tail.

53. A Beaver Dam

By Randolph Barnes Marcy (1852)

A community of beavers have selected a spot upon the creek near our camp, for their interesting labors and habitations. I know of no animal concerning which the accounts of travellers have been more extraordinary, more marvellous or contradictory, than those given of the beaver. By some he is elevated in point of intellect almost to a level with man. He has been said, for instance, to construct houses, with several floors and rooms; to plaster the rooms with mud in such a manner as to make smooth walls, and to drive stakes of six or eight inches in diameter into the ground, and to perform many other astounding feats, which I am inclined to believe are not supported by credible testimony. Laying aside these questionable statements, there is quite enough in the natural history of the beaver to excite our wonder and admiration. For instance, at this place, upon an examination of the dam they have constructed, I was both astonished and delighted at the wonderful sagacity, skill, and perseverance which they have shown.

Having chosen a spot where the banks on each side of the creek were narrow and sufficiently high to raise a head of about five feet, they selected two cotton-wood trees fifteen inches in diameter, situated above this point, and inclined towards the stream: these they cut down with their teeth, (as the marks upon the stumps plainly showed,) floated them down to the position chosen for the dam, and placed them across the stream with an inclination downward, uniting in the centre. This formed the foundation

upon which the superstructure of brush and earth was placed, in precisely the same manner as a brush dam is made by our millwrights, with the bushes and earth alternating and packed closely, the butts in all cases turned down the stream. After this is raised to a sufficient height, the top is covered with earth, except in the centre, where there is a sluice or waste-wier, which lets off the superfluous water when it rises so high as to endanger the structure. In examining the results of the labors of these ingenious animals, it occurred to me that the plan of erecting our brush dams must have been originally suggested from seeing those of the beavers, as they are very similar.

I watched for some time upon the banks of the pond, but could see none of the animals. I presume they think we make too much noise in our camp to suit them, and deem it most prudent to remain concealed in their sub-marine houses. I observed one place above the pond where they had commenced another dam, and had progressed so far as to cut down two trees on opposite sides of the creek; but as they did not fall in the right direction to suit their purposes, the work was abandoned.

54. A Horse in a California Bar-room

By Mrs. D. B. Bates (1858)

While stopping at the Tremont House, I witnessed what to me was a novel sight; and I will endeavor to relate, in a manner which I hope will interest, the method of taming a wild horse. The first thing I

saw was an unusual collection of people, and in their midst a horse blindfolded, with a Mexican vaquero in the act of mounting. When once seated on the back of these wild, fleet animals of the plains, it is next to an impossibility to unhorse these men. From the nature of their pursuits and amusements, they have brought horsemanship to a degree of perfection challenging admiration, and exciting astonishment. All things being in readiness, the blinder was removed. The horse, for the first time in his life feeling the weight of man upon his back, with distended nostrils, eyes glaring like orbs of fire, and protruding from their sockets, gave a succession of fierce snorts, performed sundry evolutions which would have puzzled the master of a gymnasium to have imitated, and then dashed off at a furious rate, determined to free himself from his captor, or die in the attempt.

It was an exciting and cruel sport to witness. The reeking sides of the poor beast were covered with foam and blood, which had been drawn by driving those merciless spurs into the flesh. Both horse and rider would disappear for a few moments in some distant part of the town, then reappear again, dashing madly on. Finally, the horse, in passing the Tremont Hotel, which was all thrown open in front to admit air, sprang, quick as a flash, upon the piazza, and dashed into the bar-room. In making his ingress so suddenly, the Mexican's head had been forcibly struck against the top of the door, and he fell stunned to the floor. The inmates of the bar-room, about twenty in number, fled in every direction. The bar-keeper, a very corpulent person, went out through a small back window — so small, that, upon ordinary

occasions, he would never have had the presumption to attempt it, for it actually endangered his life suddenly to thrust his portly figure through so small an aperture; but now, out of two evils, he was forced to choose the least. The horse, finding himself in undisputed possession of the room, stood for a moment looking at himself in a large mirror hung behind the long marble slab. Then he dashed furiously at the bar, upset it, smashed the splendid mirror into a thousand pieces, broke the cut-glass decanters, while the contents ran upon the floor. He also broke to pieces several large arm-chairs, valued at twelve dollars apiece. Then he passed through a side-door into a large saloon, and crossed that without doing any material damage. As the horse was leaving the house, the Mexican, who recovered his senses, sprang with surprising agility upon his back, and the race for freedom again commenced; but this time it was not for long. The horse, reduced almost to prostration, yielded to the superior power of man, and was taken, more dead than alive, to a stable, rubbed down, placed in a stall, fed, and petted; and, from the hour in which he unwillingly gave up a life of freedom, never more to roam with a wild herd over broad plains and flowery vales, he was a gentle, submissive slave.

The wild horse is gracefully formed, with flowing tail and mane; but I never saw one that was fat: they race their flesh off. The man who owned the horse readily paid the expenses of refitting the bar-room. The amount of property he destroyed was at that time estimated at a thousand dollars.

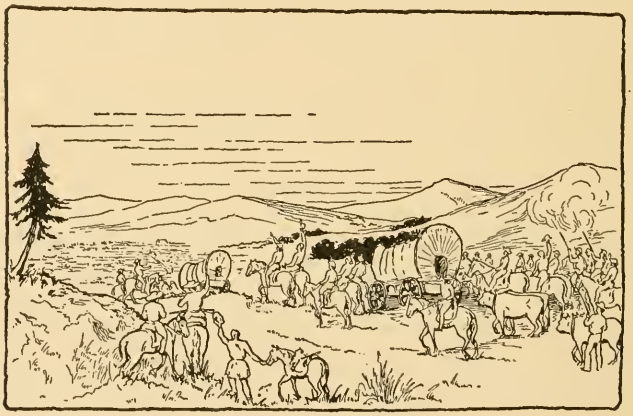
55. On the Road

By Francis Parkman (1847)

We were moving slowly along, not far from a patch of woods which lay on the right. Jack rode a little in advance, when suddenly he faced about, pointed to the woods, and roared out to his brother, —

"O Bill! here's a cow."

The Captain instantly galloped forward, and he and Jack made a vain attempt to capture the prize;



THE OREGON TRAIL.

but the cow, with a well-grounded distrust of their intentions, took refuge among the trees. Rob joined them, and they soon drove her out. We watched their evolutions as they galloped around her, trying in vain to noose her with their trail-ropes, which they had converted into lariettes for the occasion. At length they resorted to milder measures, and the cow

was driven along with the party. Soon after, the usual thunder-storm came up, and the wind blew with such fury that the streams of rain flew almost horizontally along the prairie, and roared like a cataract. The horses turned tail to the storm, and stood hanging their heads, bearing the infliction with an air of meekness and resignation; while we drew our heads between our shoulders, and crouched forward, so as to make our back serve as a shed for the rest of our persons.

Meanwhile the cow, taking advantage of the tumult, ran off, to the great discomfiture of the Captain. In defiance of the storm, he pulled his cap tight over his brows, jerked a huge buffalo-pistol from his holster, and set out at full speed after her. This was the last we saw of them for some time, for the mist and rain made an impenetrable veil; but at length we heard the Captain's shout, and saw him looming through the tempest, the picture of a Hibernian cavalier, with his cocked pistol held aloft for safety's sake, and a countenance of anxiety and excitement. The cow trotted before him, but exhibited evident signs of an intention to run off again, and the Captain was roaring to us to head her. But the rain had got in behind our coat collars, and was travelling over our necks in numerous little streamlets, and being afraid to move our heads, for fear of admitting more, we sat stiff and immovable, looking at the Captain askance, and laughing at his frantic movements. At last the cow made a sudden plunge and ran off; the Captain grasped his pistol firmly, spurred his horse, and galloped after, with evident designs of mischief. In a moment we heard the faint report, deadened by the rain, and then the conqueror and

his victim reappeared. Not long after, the storm moderated, and we advanced again. The cow walked painfully along under the charge of Jack, to whom the Captain had committed her, while he himself rode forward in his old capacity of vidette. We were approaching a long line of trees, that followed a stream stretching across our path, far in front, when we beheld the vidette galloping towards us apparently much excited, but with a broad grin on his face.

"Let that cow drop behind!" he shouted to us; "here's her owners."

And, in fact, as we approached the line of trees, a large white object, like a tent, was visible behind them. On approaching, however, we found, instead of the expected Mormon camp, nothing but the lonely prairie, and a large white rock standing by the path. The cow, therefore, resumed her place in our procession.

56. The Bee-hunter

By Thomas Thorpe (1846)

It was on a beautiful Southern October morning, at the hospitable mansion of a friend, that I first had the pleasure of seeing Tom Owen. He was on this occasion straggling up the rising ground that led to the house of my host. His head was adorned with an outlandish pattern of a hat; his legs were clad in a pair of trousers, beautifully fringed by the brier-bushes through which they were often drawn; coats and vests he considered as superfluities; hanging upon his back were a couple of pails; and an axe in

his right hand formed the varieties that represented Tom Owen. As is usual with great men, he had his followers, and with a courtier-like humility they depended upon the expression of his face for all their hopes of success.

The usual salutations of meeting were sufficient to draw me within the circle of his influence, and I at once became one of his most ready followers. "See yonder!" said Tom, stretching his long arm into infinite space, "see yonder — there's a bee." We all looked in the direction he pointed, but that was the extent of our observation. "It was a fine bee," continued Tom, "black body, yellow legs, and into that tree," pointing to a towering oak, blue in the distance. "On a clear day I can see a bee over a mile, easy!"

After a variety of wandering through the thick woods, and clambering over fences, we came to our place of destination as pointed out by Tom; he selected a mighty tree whose trunk contained the sweets, the possession of which the poets have likened to other sweets that leave a sting behind. The felling of a great tree is a sight that calls up a variety of emotions; and Tom's game was lodged in one of the finest in the forest. But "the axe was laid at the root of the tree," which, in Tom's mind, was made expressly for bees to build their nests in, that he might cut them down and obtain possession thereof. The sharp sounds of the axe as it played in the hands of Tom, and was replied to by a stout negro from the opposite side, rapidly gained upon the heart of the lordly sacrifice. There was little poetry in the thought that long before this mighty empire of states was formed, Tom Owen's "bee-hive" had stretched its

brawny arms to the winter's blast and grown green in the summer's sun. Yet such was the case, and how long I might have moralized I know not, had not the enraged buzzing about my ears satisfied me that the occupants of the tree were not going to give up their home and treasure without showing considerable practical fight. No sooner had the little insects satisfied themselves that they were about to be invaded than they began one after another to descend from their airy abode and fiercely pitch into our faces; anon a small company, headed by an old veteran, would charge with its entire force upon all parts of our body at once. It need not be said that the better part of valor was displayed by a precipitate retreat from such attacks.

In the midst of this warfare the tree began to tremble with the fast-repeated strokes of the axe, and then might have been seen a bee-hive of stingers precipitating themselves from above on the unfortunate hunter beneath. Now it was that Tom shone forth in his glory.

His partisans, like many hangers-on about great men, began to desert him on the first symptoms of danger; and when the trouble thickened, they one and all, took to their heels, and left only our hero and Sambo to fight their adversaries. Sambo, however, soon dropped his axe and fell into all kinds of contortions; first he would seize the back of his neck with his hands, then his shins, and yell with pain. "Don't holler, nigger, till you get out of the woods," said the sublime Tom, consolingly; but writhe he did, until he broke and left Tom "alone in his glory."

Cut—thwack! sounded through the confused hum at the foot of the tree, marvellously reminding me of

the interruptions that occasionally broke in upon the otherwise monotonous hours of my school-boy days. A sharp cracking finally told me the chopping was done, and looking aloft, I saw the mighty tree balancing in the air. Slowly and majestically it bowed for the first time towards its mother earth, gaining velocity as it descended, shivering the trees that interrupted its downward course, and falling with thundering sound, splintering its mighty limbs and burying them deeply in the ground.

The sun, for the first time in at least two centuries, broke uninterruptedly through the chasm made in the forest, and shone with splendor upon the magnificent Tom standing a conqueror among his spoils.

As might be expected, the bees were very much astonished and confused, and by their united voices they proclaimed death to all their foes. But the wary hunter was up to the tricks of this trade, and, like a politician, he knew how easily an enraged mob could be quelled with smoke; and smoke he tried until his enemies were completely destroyed. We, Tom's hangers-on, now approached his treasure. It was a rich one, and, as he observed, "contained a rich chance of plunder." Nine feet, by measurement, of the hollow of the tree was full, and this afforded many pails of pure honey. Tom was liberal, and supplied us all with more than we wanted, and with Sambo's help, "toted" his share to his own home, where it was soon devoured and replaced by the destruction of another tree and another nation of bees.



AN INDIAN ENCAMPMENT.

PART V

INDIANS

57. A Little Indian Captive

By Mrs. Juliette A. Kinzie (1779)

I

On a bright afternoon in the autumn of 1779, two children of Mr. Lytle, a girl of nine, and her brother, two years younger, were playing in a little dingle or hollow in the rear of their father's house. Some large trees, which had been recently felled, were lying here and there, still untrimmed of their branches, and many logs, prepared for fuel, were scattered around. Upon one of these the children, wearied with their sports, seated themselves, and to beguile the time they fell into conversation upon a subject that greatly perplexed them.

While playing in the same place a few hours previous, they had imagined they saw an Indian lurking behind one of the fallen trees. The Indians of the neighborhood were in the habit of making occasional visits to the family, and they had become familiar and even affectionate with many of them, but this seemed a stranger, and after the first hasty glance they fled in alarm to the house.

Their mother chid them for the report they brought, which she endeavored to convince them was without foundation. "You know," said she, "you are always alarming us unnecessarily — the neighbors' children have frightened you to death. Go back to your play and learn to be more courageous."

So the children returned to their sports, hardly persuaded by their mother's arguments. While they were thus seated upon the trunk of the tree, their discourse was interrupted by the note, apparently, of a quail not far off.

"Listen," said the boy, as a second note answered the first, "do you hear that?"

"Yes," was the reply, and after a few moments' silence, "do you not hear a rustling among the branches of the tree yonder?"

"Perhaps it is a squirrel — but look! what is that? Surely I saw something red among the branches. It looked like a fawn popping up its head."

At this moment, the children who had been gazing so intently in the direction of the fallen tree that all other objects were forgotten, felt themselves seized from behind and pinioned in an iron grasp. What were their horror and dismay to find themselves in the arms of savages, whose terrific countenances and gestures plainly showed them to be enemies!

After a toilsome and painful march of many days, the party reached the Seneca village, upon the headwaters of the Allegany, near what is now called Olean Point. On their arrival the chief, their conductor, who was distinguished by the name of Big-White-Man, led his prisoners to the principal lodge. This was occupied by his mother, the widow of the

head-chief of that band, who was called by them the Old Queen.

On entering her presence, her son presented her the little girl, saying:

"My mother — I bring you a child to supply the place of my brother, who was killed by the Lenapé six moons ago. She shall dwell in my lodge, and be to me a sister. Treat her kindly — our father will give us many horses and guns to buy her back again."

The Old Queen fulfilled the injunctions of her son. She received the prisoners, and every comfort was provided them that her simple and primitive mode of life rendered possible.

A treaty was immediately entered into for the ransom of the captives, which was easily accomplished in regard to the younger child. But no offers, no entreaties, no promises, could procure the release of the little Eleanor, the adopted child of the tribe. "No," the chief said, "she was his sister; he had taken her to supply the place of his brother who was killed by the enemy — she was dear to him, and he would not part with her."

Finding every effort unavailing to shake this resolution, the father was at length compelled to take his sorrowful departure with such of his beloved ones as he had had the good fortune to recover.

Time rolled on, and every year the hope of recovering the little captive became more faint. She, in the meantime, continued to wind herself more and more closely around the heart of her Indian brother. Nothing could exceed the consideration and affection with which she was treated, not only by himself, but by his mother, the Old Queen. All their stock of brooches

and wampum was employed in the decoration of her person. The principal seat and the most delicate viands were invariably reserved for her, and no efforts were spared to promote her happiness, and to render her forgetful of her former home and kindred.

The only drawback to the happiness of the little prisoner, aside from her longings after her own dear home, was the enmity she encountered from the wife of the Big-White-Man. This woman, from the day of her arrival at the village, and adoption into the family as a sister, had conceived for her the greatest animosity, which, at first, she had the prudence to conceal from the observation of her husband.

One afternoon, during the temporary absence of the Old Queen, her daughter-in-law entered the lodge with a bowl of something she had prepared, and stooping down to the mat on which the child lay, said, in an affectionate accent,

"Drink, my sister. I have brought you that which will drive this fever far from you."

On raising her head to reply, the little girl perceived a pair of eyes peeping through a crevice in the lodge, and fixed upon her with a very peculiar and significant expression. With the quick perception acquired partly from nature, and partly from her intercourse with this people, she replied faintly,

"Set it down, my sister. When this fit of the fever has passed, I will drink your medicine."

The squaw, too cautious to use importunity, busied herself about in the lodge for a short time, then withdrew to another, near at hand. Meantime, the bright eyes continued peering through the opening, until they had watched their object fairly out of sight, then

a low voice, the voice of a young friend and playfellow, spoke,

"Do not drink that, which your brother's wife has brought you. She hates you, and is only waiting an opportunity to rid herself of you. I have watched her all the morning, and have seen her gathering the most deadly herbs. I knew for whom they were intended, and came hither to warn you."

"Take the bowl," said the little invalid, "and carry it to my mother's lodge."

This was accordingly done. The contents of the bowl were found to consist principally of a decoction of the root of the May-apple, the most deadly poison known among the Indians.

It is not in the power of language to describe the indignation that pervaded the little community when this discovery was made known. The squaws ran to and fro, as is their custom when excited, each vying with the other in heaping invectives upon the culprit. No further punishment was, however, for the present inflicted upon her, but the first burst of rage over, she was treated with silent abhorrence.

The little patient was removed to the lodge of the Old Queen, and strictly guarded, while her enemy was left to wander in silence and solitude about the fields and woods, until the return of her husband should determine her punishment.

In a few days, the excursion being over, the Big-White-Man and his party returned to the village. Contrary to the usual custom of savages, he did not, in his first transport at learning the attempt on the life of his little sister, take summary vengeance on the offender. He contented himself with banishing her from his lodge, never to return, and condemning

her to hoe corn in a distant part of the large field or enclosure which served the whole community for a garden.

Although she would still show her vindictive disposition whenever, by chance, the little girl with her companions wandered into that vicinity by striking at her with her hoe, or by some other spiteful manifestation, yet she was either too well watched, or stood too much in awe of her former husband to repeat the attempt upon his sister's life.

II

Four years had now elapsed since the capture of little Nelly. Her heart was by nature warm and affectionate, so that the unbounded tenderness of those she dwelt among had called forth a corresponding feeling of affection in her heart. She regarded the Chief and his mother with love and reverence, and had so completely learned their language and customs as almost to have forgotten her own.

So identified had she become with the tribe, that the remembrance of her home and family had nearly faded from her memory; all but her mother — her mother whom she had loved with a strength of affection natural to her warm and ardent character, and to whom her heart still clung with a fondness that no time or change could destroy.

The peace of 1783 between Great Britain and the United States now took place. A general pacification of the Indian tribes was the consequence, and fresh hopes were renewed in the bosoms of Mr. and Mrs. Lytle.

They removed with their family to Fort Niagara,

near which, on the American side, was the great Council Fire of the Senecas. Col. Johnson readily undertook a fresh negotiation with the Chief, but in order to ensure every chance of success, he again proceeded in person to the village of the Big-White-Man.

His visit was most opportune. It was the "Feast of the Green Corn," when he arrived among them. Every one appeared in his gala dress. That of the little adopted child consisted of a petticoat of blue broadcloth, bordered with gay-colored ribbons; a sack or upper garment of black silk, ornamented with three rows of silver brooches, the centre ones from the throat to the hem being of large size, and those from the shoulders down being no larger than a shilling-piece, and set as closely as possible. Around her neck were innumerable strings of white and purple wampum, an Indian ornament manufactured from the inner surface of the mussel-shell. Her hair was clubbed behind, and loaded with beads of various colors. Leggings of scarlet cloth, and moccasins of deer-skin embroidered with porcupine quills, completed her costume.

Col. Johnson was received with all the consideration due to his position, and to the long friendship that had subsisted between him and the tribe. The Chief was induced to promise that at the Grand Council soon to be held at Fort Niagara he would attend, bringing his little sister with him.

The time at length arrived when, her heart bounding with joy, little Nelly was placed on horseback to accompany her Indian brother to the great Council of the Senecas. She had promised him that she would never leave him without his permission, and he relied confidently on her word thus given.

The father and mother, attended by all the officers and ladies, stood upon the grassy bank awaiting their approach. They had seen at a glance that the little captive was with them.

The Chief held his darling by the hand until the river was passed — until the boat touched the bank — until the child sprang forward into the arms of the mother from whom she had been so long separated.

When the Chief witnessed that outburst of affection he could withstand no longer.

"She shall go," said he. "The mother must have her child again. I will go back alone."

With one silent gesture of farewell he turned and stepped on board the boat. No arguments or entreaties could induce him to remain at the council, but having gained the other side of the Niagara, he mounted his horse, and with his young men was soon lost in the depths of the forest.

Little Nelly saw her friend the Chief no more, but she never forgot him. To the day of her death she remembered with tenderness and gratitude her brother the Big-White-Man, and her friends and playfellows among the Senecas.

58. A Scotchman and an Indian Joke

By Hector St. John Crevecœur (1782)

A few days after it happened the whole family of Mr. Phillip Rand went to meeting, and left Andrew to take care of the house. While he was at the door, attentively reading the Bible, nine Indians just come

from the mountains, suddenly made their appearance, and unloaded their packs of furs on the floor of the piazza. Conceive, if you can, what was Andrew's consternation at this extraordinary sight! From the singular appearance of these people, the honest Hebridean took them for a lawless band come to rob his master's house. He therefore, like a faithful guardian, precipitately withdrew, and shut the doors; but as most of our houses are without locks, he was reduced to the necessity of fixing his knife over the latch, and then flew up stairs in quest of a broad sword he had brought from Scotland. The Indians, who were particular friends of the family, guessed at his suspicions and fears; they forcibly lifted the door, and suddenly took possession of the house, got all the bread and meat they wanted, and sat themselves down by the fire.



A CHILD'S MOCCASINS.

At this instant Andrew, with his broad sword in his hand, entered the room; the Indians earnestly looking at him, and attentively watching his motions. After a very few reflections, Andrew found that his weapon was useless, when opposed to nine tomahawks; but this did not diminish his anger; on the contrary, it grew greater on observing the calm impudence with which they were devouring the family provisions. Unable to resist, he called them names in broad Scotch, and ordered them to desist and be gone; to which the Indians (as they told me afterwards) replied in their equally broad idiom. It must

have been a most unintelligible altercation between this honest Barra man, and nine Indians who did not much care for anything he could say. At last he ventured to lay his hands on one of them, in order to turn him out of the house. Here Andrew's fidelity got the better of his prudence; for the Indian, by his motions, threatened to scalp him, while the rest gave the warwhoop. This horrid noise so effectually frightened poor Andrew, that, unmindful of his courage, of his broad sword, and his intentions, he rushed out, left them masters of the house, and disappeared. I have heard one of the Indians say since, that he never laughed so heartily in his life.

Andrew at a distance, soon recovered from the fears which had been inspired by this infernal yell, and thought of no other remedy than to go to the meeting-house, which was about two miles distant. In the eagerness of his honest intentions, with looks of affright still marked on his countenance, he called Mr. Rand out, and told him with great vehemence of style, that nine monsters were come to his house — some blue, some red, and some black; that they had little axes in their hands out of which they smoked; and that like highlanders, they had no breeches; that they were devouring all his victuals, and that God only knew what they would do more. "Pacify yourself," said Mr. Rand, "my house is as safe with these people, as if I was there myself; as for the victuals, they are heartily welcome, honest Andrew; they are not people of much ceremony; they help themselves thus whenever they are among their friends; I do so too in their wigwams, whenever I go to their village: you had better therefore step in and hear the remainder of the sermon, and when the meet-

ing is over we will all go back in the wagon together."

At their return, Mr. Rand, who speaks the Indian language very well, explained the whole matter; the Indians renewed their laugh, and shook hands with honest Andrew, whom they made to smoke out of their pipes; and thus peace was made, and ratified according to the Indian custom, by the calumet.

59. Puc-Puggy and the Rattlesnake

By William Bartram (1791)

I was in the forenoon busy in my apartment in the council-house, drawing some curious flowers; when, on a sudden, my attention was taken off by a tumult without, at the Indian camp. I stepped to the door opening to the piazza, where I met my friend the old interpreter, who informed me that there was a very large rattlesnake in the Indian camp, which had taken possession of it, having driven the men, women and children out, and he heard them saying that they would send for Puc-Puggy (for that was the name which they had given me, signifying "the Flower Hunter") to kill him or take him out of their camp. I answered that I desired to have nothing to do with him, fearing some disagreeable consequences. My old friend turned about to carry my answer to the Indians. I presently heard them approaching and calling for Puc-Puggy. Starting up to escape from their sight by a back door, a party consisting of three young

fellows, richly dressed and ornamented, stepped in, and requested me to accompany them to their encampment. I desired them to excuse me at this time; they pleaded and entreated me to go with them, in order to free them from a great rattlesnake which had entered their camp. They said that none of them had freedom or courage to expel him; and they understood that it was my pleasure to collect all their animals and other natural productions of their land. Therefore they desired that I would come with them and take him away; I was welcome to him, they added. I at length consented and attended them to their encampment, where I beheld the Indians greatly disturbed.

The men with sticks and tomahawks, and the women and children were collected together at a distance in fright and trepidation, while the dreaded and revered serpent leisurely traversed their camp, visiting the fireplaces from one to another, picking up fragments of their provisions and licking their platters. The men gathered around me, exciting me to remove him; being armed with a lightwood knot, I approached the reptile, who instantly collected himself in a vast coil (their attitude of defence). I cast my missile weapon at him, which, luckily taking his head, despatched him instantly, and laid him trembling at my feet. I took out my knife, severed his head from his body. Then I turned about, and the Indians complimented me with every demonstration of satisfaction and approbation for my heroism and friendship for them. I carried off the head of the serpent bleeding in my hand as a trophy of victory, took out the mortal fangs, and deposited them carefully amongst my collections.

I had not been long retired to my apartment, before I was again roused from it by a tumult in the yard. Puc-Puggy was called on, so I started up, when instantly the old interpreter met me again, and told me the Indians were approaching in order to scratch me. I asked him for what? He answered, for killing the rattlesnake within their camp. Before I could make any reply or effect my escape, three young fellows singing, arm in arm, came up to me. I observed one of the three was a young prince who had, on my first interview with him, declared himself my friend and protector, and told me that if ever occasion should offer in his presence, he would risk his life to defend mine or my property. This young champion stood by his two associates, one on each side of him. They affected a countenance and air of displeasure and importance, instantly presented their scratching instruments, and flourishing them, spoke boldly, and said that I was too heroic and violent, that it would be good for me to lose some of my blood to make me more mild and tame; for that purpose they were come to scratch me. They gave me no time to expostulate or reply, but attempted to lay hold on me. I resisted; and my friend, the young prince, interposed and pushed them off, saying that I was a brave warrior and his friend and they should not insult me, whereupon instantly they altered their countenance and behavior. They all whooped in chorus, took me by the hand, clapped me on the shoulder, and laid their hands on their breasts in token of sincere friendship, and laughing aloud, said I was a sincere friend to the Seminoles, a worthy and brave warrior, and that no one should hereafter attempt to injure me. Then all three joined arm in arm again and went off shouting and pro-

claiming Puc-Puggy was their friend. Thus it seemed that the whole was a ludicrous farce to satisfy their people and appease the manes of the dead rattlesnake. These people never kill the rattlesnake or any other serpent, because if they do so, as they believe, the spirit of the killed snake will excite or influence his living kindred or relatives to revenge the injury or violence done to him when alive.

In my youth, attending my father on a journey to the Catskill Mountains, in New York, I had gained the summit of a steep rocky precipice, ahead of our guide, and was just entering a shady vale, when I saw at the root of a small shrub, a singular and beautiful appearance, which I remember to be a large kind of fungus called Jews' ears. I was just drawing back my foot to kick it over, when at the instant, my father being near, cried out, "A rattlesnake, my son!" and jerked me back, which probably saved my life. I had never before seen one. This was of the kind which our guide called a yellow one; it was very beautiful, speckled and clouded. My father pleaded for his life, but our guide was inexorable, saying he never spared the life of a rattlesnake, and killed him; my father took his skin and fangs.

Some years after this, when again in company with my father on a journey into East Florida, I attended him on a botanical excursion. Some time after we had been rambling in a swamp about a quarter of a mile from the camp, I was ahead a few paces, and my father bade me observe the rattlesnake before my feet. I stopped and saw the monster formed in a high spiral coil, not half his length from my feet: another step forward would have put my life in his power, as I must have touched if not stumbled over

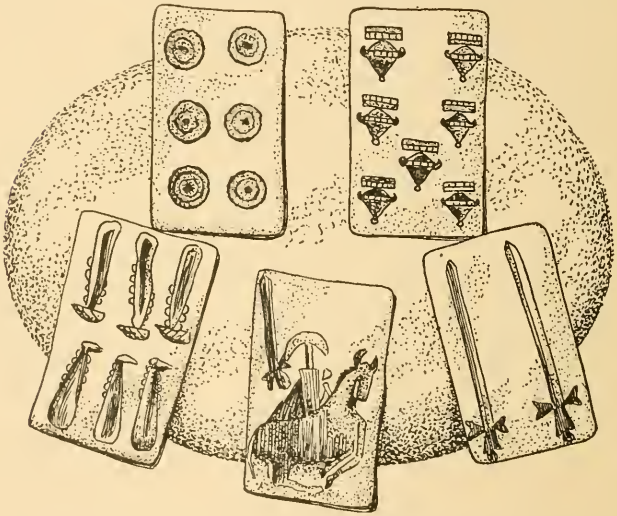
him. I instantly cut off a little sapling and soon despatched him: this serpent was about six feet in length, and as think as an ordinary man's leg. I cut off a long tough withe or vine, fastened it round the neck of the slain serpent, and dragged him after me, his scaly body sounding over the ground, entered the camp with him in triumph, and was soon surrounded by the amazed multitude, both Indians and my countrymen. The adventure soon reached the ears of the commander, who sent an officer to request that, if the snake had not bit himself, he might have him served up for his dinner. I readily delivered up the body of the snake to the cooks, and being that day invited to dine at the governor's table, saw the snake served up in several dishes; Governor Grant was fond of the flesh of the rattlesnake. I tasted of it but could not swallow it. This dreaded animal is easily killed; a stick no thicker than a man's thumb is sufficient to kill the largest at one stroke, if well directed, either on the head or across the back. They cannot make their escape by running off, nor indeed do they attempt it when attacked.

60. Hewit's Escape from the Indians

By Henry Howe (1792)

Sometime in the month of May, 1792, while living at Neil's station, on the little Kenawha, Mr. Hewit rose early in the morning, and went out about a mile from the garrison in search of a stray horse, little

expecting any Indians to be near, for he had heard of none in that vicinity for some time. He was sauntering along at his ease, in an obscure cattle path, thinking more of his stray animal than of danger, when all at once three Indians sprang from behind two large trees, that stood one on each side of the track, where they had been watching his



INDIAN PLAYING CARDS.

approach. So sudden was the onset, and so completely was he in their grasp, that resistance was vain, and would probably have been the cause of his death. He therefore quietly surrendered, thinking that in a few days he should find some way of escape. For himself, he felt but little uneasiness; his great concern was for his wife and child, from whom, with the yearnings of a father's heart, he

was thus forcibly separated, and whom he might never see again.

In their progress to the towns on the Sandusky plains, the Indians treated their prisoner, Hewit, with as little harshness as could be expected. He was always confined at night by fastening his wrists and ankles to saplings, as he lay extended upon his back upon the ground, with an Indian on each side. By day his limbs were free, but he always marched with one Indian before, and two behind him. As they approached the prairies, frequent halts were made to search for honey, for the wild bee could be found in astonishing numbers in every hollow tree, and often in the ground beneath decayed roots. This afforded them many luscious repasts, of which the prisoner was allowed to partake. The coming of the European honey bee to the forests of North America, since its colonization by the whites, is, in fact, the only real addition to its comforts that the red man has ever received from the destroyer of his race; and this industrious insect, so fond of the society of man, seems also destined to destruction by the bee moth, and like the buffalo and the deer, will soon vanish from the woods and the prairies of the West.

While the Indians were occupied in these searches, Hewit closely watched an opportunity for escape, but his captors were equally vigilant. As they receded from the danger of pursuit, they were less hurried in their march, and often stopped to hunt and amuse themselves. The level prairie afforded fine ground for one of their favorite sports, the foot race. In this, Hewit was invited to join, and soon found that he could easily outrun two of them, but the other was

more than his match, which discouraged him from trying to escape, until a more favorable opportunity. They treated him familiarly, and were much pleased with his lively, cheerful manners. After they had come within one or two day's march of their village, they made a halt to hunt, and although they had usually taken him with them, they left their prisoner at their camp, as he complained of being sick. To make all safe, they placed him on his back, and fastened his wrists with stout thongs of raw-hide to saplings, and tied his legs to a small tree. After they had been gone a short time, he began to put in operation the plan he had been meditating for escape, trusting that the thickness of his wrists, in comparison with the smallness of his hands, would enable him to withdraw them from the ligatures. After long and violent exertions, he succeeded in liberating his hands, but not without severely lacerating the skin and covering them with blood. His legs were next freed by untying them, but not without a great effort.

Once fairly at liberty, the first object was to secure some food for the long journey which was before him. As the Indian's larder is seldom well stocked, with all his search he could only find two small pieces of jerked venison, not more than sufficient for a single meal. With this light stock of provision, his body nearly unclothed, and without even a knife or a tomahawk, to assist in procuring more food, he started for the settlements on the Muskingum, as the nearest point where he could meet with friends. It seems that the Indians returned to the camp soon after his escape, for that night, while cautiously traversing a wood, he heard the crackling of a breaking twig not

far from him. Dropping silently on to the ground where he stood, he beheld his three enemies in pursuit. To say that he was not agitated, would not be true; his senses were wide awake, and his heart beat quick, but it was a heart that never knew fear. It so happened that they passed a few yards to one side of him, and he remained unseen. As soon as they were at a sufficient distance, he altered his course, and saw no more of them.

Suffering everything but death from the exhausting effects of hunger and fatigue, after nine days he struck the waters of the Big Muskingum, and came into the garrison at Wolf Creek Mills. During this time he had no food but roots and the bark of the slippery-elm after the two bits of venison were expended. When he came in sight of the station, he was so completely exhausted that he could not stand or halloo. Torn, bloody and disfigured, by the briers and brush, he thought it imprudent to show himself, lest he should be taken for an Indian, and shot by the sentries. In this forlorn state Hewit remained until evening, when he crawled silently to the gateway, which was open, and crept in before any one was aware of his being near. As they all had heard of his capture, and some personally knew him, he was instantly recognized by a young man, as the light of the fire fell on his face, who exclaimed, "Here is Hewit." They soon clothed and fed him, and his fine constitution directly restored his health.

61. The Indian and the Tide

By Isaac Weld (1796)

The young Wyandot, whom I before mentioned, as having made such a wonderful day's journey on foot, happened to be at Philadelphia when I was there. He appeared highly delighted with the river, and the great number of ships of all sizes upon it; but the tide attracted his attention more than any thing else whatsoever. On coming to the river the first day he looked up at the sun, and made certain observations upon the course of the stream, and general situation of the place, as the Indians never fail to do on coming to any new or remarkable spot. The second time, however, he went down to the water, he found to his surprise that the river was running with equal rapidity in a contrary direction to what he had seen it run the day before. For a moment he imagined that by some mistake he must have got to the opposite side of it; but he soon recollected himself, and being persuaded that he stood on the very same spot from whence he had viewed it the day before, his astonishment became great indeed.

To obtain information upon such an interesting point, he immediately sought out an aid-de-camp of General Wayne, who had brought him to town. This gentleman, however, only rendered the appearance still more mysterious to him, by telling him, that the great spirit, for the convenience of the white men, who were his particular favourites, had made the rivers in their country to run two ways. The poor Wyandot was satisfied with the answer, and replied, "Ah, my friend, if the great spirit would make the

Ohio to run two ways for us, we should very often pay you a visit at Pittsburgh." During his stay at Philadelphia he never failed to visit the river every day.

62. Speech of Tecumseh

By Tecumseh (1813)



AN INDIAN CHIEF.
(RED JACKET.)

Father, Listen to your children! — You have them now all before you. In the war before this, our British father gave the hatchet to his red children, when our old chiefs were alive. They are now dead. In that war, our father was thrown on his back by the Americans, and our father took them by the hand without our knowledge; and we are afraid that our father will do so again at

this time. Summer before last, when I came forward with my red brethren, and was ready to take up the hatchet in favour of our British father, we were told not to be in a hurry — that he had not yet determined to fight the Americans.

Listen! — When war was declared, our father stood up and gave us the tomahawk, and told us that he was now ready to strike the Americans: that he wanted our assistance; and that he would certainly get us our lands back which the Americans had taken from us.

Listen! — You told us that time, to bring forward our families to this place; and we did so, and you promised to take care of them, and that they should want for nothing, while the men would go and fight the enemy; that we need not trouble ourselves about the enemy's garrisons; that we knew nothing about them; and that our father would attend to that part of the business. You also told your red children that you would take good care of their garrison here, which made their hearts glad.

Listen! — When we went last to the Rapids, it is true we gave you assistance. It is hard to fight people who live like ground hogs.

Listen Father! — Our fleet has gone out — we know they have fought — we have heard the great guns, but know nothing of what has happened to our father with one arm. Our troops have gone one way, and we are very much astonished to see our father tying up every thing and preparing to run away the other, without letting his red children know what his intentions are. You always told us to remain here, and take care of our lands; it made our hearts glad to hear that was your wish. Our great father, the

king, is the head, and you represent him. You always told us, that you would never draw your foot off British ground; but now, father, we see you are drawing back, and we are sorry to see our father doing so, without seeing the enemy. We must compare our father's conduct to a fat animal, that carries its tail upon its back, but when affrighted, it drops it between its legs, and runs off.

Listen Father! — The Americans have not yet defeated us by land; neither are we sure that they have done so by water: we therefore wish to remain here, and fight our enemy, should they make their appearance. If they defeat us, we will then retreat with our father.

At the battle of the Rapids, in the last war, the Americans certainly defeated us; and when we retreated to our father's fort, at that place, the gates were shut against us. We were afraid that it would now be the case, but instead of that, we see our British father preparing to march out of his garrison.

Father! — You have got the arms and ammunition which the great father sent for his red children. If you have any idea of going away, give them to us and you may go and welcome for us. Our lives are in the hands of the Great Spirit — we are determined to defend our lands, and if it is his will, we wish to leave our bones upon them.

63. How Indians Write

By John Heckewelder (1818)

The Indians do not possess our art of writing; they have no alphabets, nor any mode of representing to the eye the sounds of words spoken, yet they have certain hieroglyphics, by which they describe facts in so plain a manner, that those who are familiar with those marks can understand them with the greatest ease, as easily, indeed, as we can understand a piece of writing. For instance, on a piece of bark, or on a large tree with the bark taken off for the purpose, by the side of a path, they can and do give every necessary information to those who come by the same way; they will in that manner let them know, that they were a war party of so many men, from such a place, of such a nation and such a tribe; how many of each tribe were in the party; to which tribe the chief or captain belonged; in what direction they proceeded to meet the enemy; how many days they were out and how many returning; what number of the enemy they had killed, how many prisoners they had brought; how many scalps they had taken; whether they had lost any of their party, and how many; what enemies they had met with, and how many they consisted of; of what nation or tribe their captain was; all which, at a single glance, is perfectly well understood by them. In the same manner they describe a chase: all Indian nations can do this, although they have not all the same marks; yet I have seen the Delawares read with ease the drawings of the Chippeways, Mingoes, Shawanos, and Wyandots, on similar subjects.

While Indians are travelling to the place of their destination, whether it be on a journey to their distant hunting grounds or on a war excursion, some of the young men are sent out to hunt by the way, who, when they have killed a deer, bear, or other animal, bring it to the path, ready to be taken away by those who are coming along (often with horses) to the place of encampment, when they all meet at night. Having hung up the meat by the side of the path, these young men make a kind of sun-dial, in order to inform those who are coming of the time of day it was at the time of their arrival and departure. A clear place in the path is sought for, and if not readily found, one is made by the side of it, and a circle or ring being drawn on the sand or earth, a stick of about two or three feet in length is fixed in the centre, with its upper end bent towards that spot in the horizon where the sun stood at the time of their arrival or departure. If both are to be noted down, two separate sticks are set; but generally one is sufficient, namely, for the time of departure.

Hunters have particular marks, which they make on the trees, where they strike off from the path to their hunting grounds or place of encampment, which is often at the distance of many miles; yet the women, who come from their towns to fetch meat from these camps, will as readily find them as if they were conducted to the spot.

I shall conclude this chapter with an anecdote, which will at once show how expressive and energetic is this hieroglyphic writing of the Indians. A white man in the Indian country, saw a Shawanos riding a horse which he recognised for his own, and claimed it from him as his property. The Indian calmly

answered, "Friend! after a little while, I will call on you at your house, when we shall talk of this matter." A few days afterwards, the Indian came to the white man's house, who insisting on having his horse restored, the other then told him: "Friend! the horse which you claim belonged to my uncle who lately died; according to the Indian custom, I have become heir to all his property." The white man not being satisfied, and renewing his demand, the Indian immediately took a coal from the fire-place, and made two striking figures on the door of the house, the one representing the white man taking the horse, and the other, himself, in the act of scalping him; then he coolly asked the trembling claimant "whether he could read this Indian writing?" The matter thus was settled at once, and the Indian rode off.

64. How the Indians talk to the Animals

By John Heckewelder (1818)

I found that the Indians paid great respect to the rattle-snake, whom they called their grandfather, and would on no account destroy him. One day, as I was walking with an elderly Indian on the banks of the Muskingum, I saw a large rattle-snake lying across the path, which I was going to kill. The Indian immediately forbade my doing so; "for," said he, "the rattle-snake is grandfather to the Indians, and is placed here on purpose to guard us, and to give us notice of impending danger by his

rattle, which is the same as if he were to tell us, 'look about!' Now," added he, "if he were to kill one of those, the others would soon know it, and the whole race would rise upon us and bite us." I observed to him that the white people were not afraid of this; for they killed all the rattle-snakes that they met with. On this he enquired whether any white man had been bitten by these animals, and of course, I answered in the affirmative. "No wonder, then!" replied he, "you have to blame yourselves for that! you did as much as declaring war against them, and you will find them in your country, where they will not fail to make frequent incursions. They are a very dangerous enemy; take care you do not irritate them in our country; they and their grandchildren are on good terms, and neither will hurt the other."

These ancient notions have, however, in a great measure died away with the last generation, and the Indians at present kill their grandfather the rattle-snake without ceremony, whenever they meet with him.

That the Indians, from the earliest times, considered themselves in a manner connected with certain animals, is evident from various customs still preserved among them, and from the names of those animals which they have collectively, as well as individually, assumed. It might, indeed, be supposed that those animals' names which they have given to their several tribes were mere badges of distinction, but if we pay attention to the reasons which they give for those denominations, the idea of a supposed family connexion is easily discernible. The Tortoise, or as it is commonly called, the Turtle tribe, among the Lenapes, claims a superiority and ascendency over

the others, because their relation, the great Tortoise, a fabled monster, the Atlas of their mythology, bears according to their traditions this great island on his back, and also because he is amphibious, and can live both on land and in the water, which neither of the heads of the other tribes can do. The merits of the Turkey, which gives its name to the second tribe, are that he is stationary, and always remains with or about them. As to the Wolf, after whom the third tribe is named, he is a rambler, by nature, running from one place to another in quest of his prey; yet they consider him as their benefactor, as it was by his means that the Indians got out of the interior of the earth. It was he, they believe, who by the appointment of the Great Spirit, killed the deer whom the Monsey found, who first discovered the way to the surface of the earth, and which allured them to come out of their damp and dark residence. For that reason, the wolf is to be honoured, and his name preserved forever among them. Such are their traditions, as they were related to me by an old man of this tribe more than fifty years ago.

These animals' names, it is true, they all use as national badges, in order to distinguish their tribes from each other at home and abroad. The Turtle warrior draws either with a coal or paint here and there on the trees along the war path, the whole animal carrying a gun with the muzzle projecting forward, and if he leaves a mark at the place where he has made a stroke on his enemy, it will be the picture of a tortoise. Those of the Turkey tribe paint only one foot of a turkey, and the Wolf tribe, sometimes a wolf at large with one leg and foot raised up to serve as a hand, in which the animal

also carries a gun with the muzzle forward. They, however, do not generally use the word "wolf," when speaking of their tribe, but call themselves Pauk-sit which means round-foot, that animal having a round foot like a dog.

The Indians, in their hours of leisure, paint their different marks or badges on the doors of their respective houses, that those who pass by may know to which tribe the inhabitants belong. Those marks also serve them for signatures to treaties and other documents. They are as proud of their origin from the tortoise, the turkey, and the wolf, as the nobles of Europe are of their descent from the feudal barons of ancient times, and when children spring from intermarriages between different tribes, their genealogy is carefully preserved by tradition in the family, that they may know to which tribe they belong.

I have often reflected on the curious connection which appears to exist in the mind of an Indian between man and the brute creation, and found much matter in it for curious observation. Although they consider themselves superior to all other animals and are very proud of that superiority; although they believe that the beasts of the forest, the birds of the air, and the fishes of the waters, were created by the Almighty Being for the use of man; yet it seems as if they ascribe the difference between themselves and the brute kind, and the dominion which they have over them, more to their superior bodily strength and dexterity than to their immortal souls.

I have already observed that the Indian includes all savage beasts within the number of his enemies. This is by no means a metaphorical or figurative expression, but is used in a literal sense, as will

appear from what I am going to relate. A Delaware hunter once shot a huge bear and broke its backbone. The animal fell and set up a most plaintive cry, something like that of the panther when he is hungry. The hunter, instead of giving him another shot, stood up close to him, and addressed him in these words: "Hark ye! bear; you are a coward, and no warrior as you pretend to be. Were you a warrior, you would show it by your firmness and not cry and whimper like an old woman. You know, bear, that our tribes are at war with each other, and that yours was the aggressor. You have found the Indians too powerful for you, and you have gone sneaking about in the woods, stealing their hogs; perhaps at this time you have hog's flesh in your inside. Had you conquered me, I would have borne it with courage and died like a brave warrior; but you, bear, sit here and cry, and disgrace your tribe by your cowardly conduct." I was present at the delivery of this curious invective; when the hunter had despatched the bear, I asked him how he thought that poor animal could understand what he said to it? "Oh!" said he, in answer, "the bear understood me very well; did you not observe how ashamed he looked while I was upbraiding him?"

Another time I witnessed a similar scene between the falls of the Ohio and the river Wabash. A young white man, named William Wells, who had been when a boy taken prisoner by a tribe of the Wabash Indians, by whom he was brought up, and had imbibed all their notions, had so wounded a large bear that he could not move from the spot, and the animal cried piteously like the one I have just mentioned. The young man went up to him, and with

seemingly great earnestness, addressed him in the Wabash language, now and then giving him a slight stroke on the nose with his ram-rod. I asked him, when he had done, what he had been saying to this bear? "I have," said he, "upbraided him for acting the part of a coward; I told him that he knew the fortune of war, that one or the other of us must have fallen; that it was his fate to be conquered, and he ought to die like a man, like a hero, and not like an old woman; that if the case had been reversed, and I had fallen into the power of my enemy, I would not have disgraced my nation as he did, but would have died with firmness and courage, as becomes a true warrior."

65. An Indian Opinion of the White Man

By John Heckewelder (1818)

They sometimes amuse themselves by passing in review those customs of the white people which appear to them most striking. They observe, amongst other things, that when the whites meet together, many of them, and sometimes all, speak at the same time, and they wonder how they can thus hear and understand each other. "Among us," they say, "only one person speaks at a time, and the others listen to him until he has done, after which, and not before, another begins to speak." They say also that the whites speak too much, and that much talk disgraces a man and is fit only for women. On this

subject they shrewdly observe, that it is well for the whites that they have the art of writing, and can write down their words and speeches; for had they, like themselves, to transmit them to posterity by means of strings and belts of wampum, they would want for their own use all the wampum that could be made, and none would be left for the Indians.

They wonder that the white people are striving so much to get rich, and to heap up treasures in this world which they cannot carry with them to the next. They ascribe this to pride and to the desire of being called rich and great. They say that there is enough in this world to live upon, without laying anything by, and as to the next world, it contains plenty of everything, and they will find all their wants satisfied when they arrive there. They, therefore, do not lay up any stores, but merely take with them when they die as much as is necessary for their journey to the world of spirits.

The Indians also observe, that the white people must have a great many thieves among them, since they put locks to their doors, which shows great apprehension that their property otherwise would not be safe: "As to us," say they, "we entertain no such fears; thieves are very rare among us, and we have no instance of any person breaking into a house. Our Indian lock is, when we go out, to set the corn pounder or billet of wood against the door, so that it may be seen that nobody is within, and there is no danger that any Indian would presume to enter a house thus secured." Let me be permitted to illustrate this by an anecdote.

In the year 1771, while I was residing on the Big Beaver, I passed by the door of an Indian, who was

a trader, and had consequently a quantity of goods in his house. He was going with his wife to Pittsburg, and they were shutting up the house, as no person remained in it during their absence. This shutting up was nothing else than putting a large hominy pounding-block, with a few sticks of wood outside against the door, so as to keep it closed. As I was looking at this man with attention while he was so employed, he addressed me in these words : "See, my friend, this is an Indian lock that I am putting to my door." I answered, "Well enough; but I see you leave much property in the house, are you not afraid that those articles will be stolen while you are gone?" — "Stolen! by whom?" — "Why, by Indians, to be sure." — "No, no," replied he, "no Indian would do such a thing, and unless a white man or white people should happen to come this way, I shall find all safe on my return."

The Indians say, that when the white people encamp in the woods they are sure to lose something; that when they are gone, something or another is always found which they have lost, such as a knife, flints, bullets, and sometimes even money. They also observe that the whites are not so attentive as they are to choosing an open dry spot for their encampment; that they will at once set themselves down in any dirty and wet place, provided they are under large trees; that they never look about to see which way the wind blows, so as to be able to lay the wood for their fires in such a position that the smoke may not blow on them; neither do they look up the trees to see whether there are not dead limbs that may fall on them while they are asleep; that any wood will do for them to lay on their fires, whether it be dry or

wet, and half rotten, so that they are involved during the whole night in a cloud of smoke; or they take such wood as young green oak, walnut, cherry, chestnut, etc., which throws sparks out to a great distance, so that their blankets and clothes get holes burned in them, and sometimes their whole camp takes fire. They also remark that the whites hang their kettles and pots over a fire just kindled, and before the great body of smoke has passed away.

They, however, acknowledge that the whites are ingenious, that they make axes, guns, knives, hoes, shovels, pots and kettles, blankets, shirts, and other very convenient articles, to which they have now become accustomed, and which they can no longer do without. "Yet," say they, "our forefathers did without all these things, and we have never heard, nor has any tradition informed us that they were at a loss for the want of them; therefore we must conclude that they also were ingenious; and, indeed, we know that they were; for they made axes of stone to cut with, and bows and arrows to kill the game: they made knives and arrows' points with sharp flint stones and bones, hoes and shovels from the shoulder blade of the elk and buffaloe; they made pots of clay, garments of skins, and ornaments with the feathers of the turkey, goose and other birds. They were not in want of anything, the game was plenty and tame, the dart shot from our arrows did not frighten them as the report of the gun now does; we had therefore everything that we could reasonably require; we lived happy!"

66. The Memorable Precept of an Indian Chief

By John Trumbull (1841)

At the age of nine or ten a circumstance occurred which deserves to be written on adamant. In the wars of New England with the aborigines, the Mohegan tribe of Indians early became friends of the English. Their favorite ground was on the banks of the river (now the Thames) between New London and Norwich. A small remnant of the Mohegans still exists, and they are sacredly protected in the possession and enjoyment of their favorite domain on the banks of the Thames. The government of this tribe had become hereditary in the family of the celebrated chief Uncas. During the time of my father's mercantile prosperity, he had employed several Indians of this tribe in hunting animals, whose skins were valuable for their fur.

Among these hunters was one named Zachary, of the royal race, an excellent hunter, but as drunken and worthless an Indian as ever lived. When he had somewhat passed the age of fifty, several members of the royal family who stood between Zachary and the throne of his tribe died, and he found himself with only one life between him and empire. In this moment his better genius resumed its sway, and he reflected seriously, "How can such a drunken wretch as I am, aspire to be the chief of this honorable race — what will my people say — and how will the shades of my noble ancestors look down indignant upon such a base successor? Can *I* succeed to the great Uncas?

I will drink no more!" He solemnly resolved never again to taste any drink but water, and he kept his resolution.

I had heard this story, and did not entirely believe it; for young as I was, I already partook in the prevailing contempt for Indians. In the beginning of May, the annual election of the principal officers of the then colony was held at Hartford, the capital: my father attended officially, and it was customary for the chief of the Mohegans also to attend. Zachary had succeeded to the rule of his tribe. My father's house was situated about midway on the road between Mohegan and Hartford, and the old chief was in the habit of coming a few days before the election, and dining with his brother governor.

One day the mischievous thought struck me to try the sincerity of the old man's temperance. The family was seated at dinner, and there was excellent home-brewed beer on the table. I addressed the old chief — "Zachary, this beer is excellent; will you taste it?" The old man dropped his knife and fork — leaned forward with a stern intensity of expression; his black eye sparkling with indignation was fixed on me. "John," said he, "you do not know what you are doing. You are serving the devil, boy! Do you know that I am an Indian! I tell you that I am, and that if I should taste your beer, I could never stop until I got to rum, and become again the drunken, contemptible wretch your father remembers me to have been. John, while you live, never again tempt any man to break a good resolution."

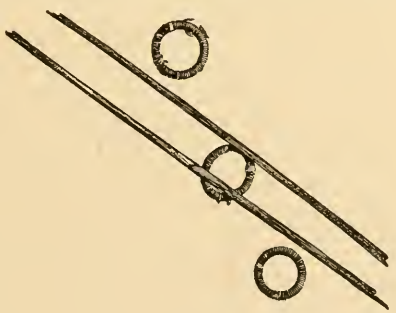
Socrates never uttered a more valuable precept — Demosthenes could not have given it in more solemn tones of eloquence. I was thunder-struck. My

parents were deeply affected; they looked at each other, at me, and at the venerable old Indian, with deep feelings of awe and respect. They afterwards frequently reminded me of the scene, and charged me never to forget it. Zachary lived to pass the age of eighty, and sacredly kept his resolution. He lies buried in the royal burial-place of his tribe, near the beautiful falls of the Yantic, the western branch of the Thames, in Norwich, on land now owned by my friend, Calvin Goddard, Esq. I visited the grave of the old chief lately, and there repeated to myself his inestimable lesson.

67. An Indian Ball Game

By W. B. Parker (1845)

Upon entering upon the prairie, we observed in the distance a crowd of natives in gay clothing, the brilliant colours blending with the verdure, and making at sunset a truly picturesque scene. Riding up, we witnessed a scene never to be forgotten. It was a ball-play. Described, as this sport has been, by the able pencil of Catlin, description falls far short of reality. About six hundred men, women and children, were assembled, all dressed in holiday costume, and



AN INDIAN GAME.

all as intent upon the game as it is possible to be where both pleasure and interest combine. The interest is one tribe against another, or one county of the same tribe, against a neighboring county; the pleasure, that which savages always take in every manly and athletic sport.

In this instance the contestants were all Choctaws, practising for their annual game with the Creeks, and I was struck with the interest taken by all the lookers on, in the proficiency of each of the players. About sixty on each side were engaged in this exciting play, than which no exercise can be more violent nor better calculated to develop muscle and harden the frame. Each player provides himself with what are called ball-sticks. They are in shape like a large spoon, made of a piece of hickory about three feet long, shaved thin for about nine inches at the end forming the spoon, then bent round until brought into shape, the end securely fastened to the handle by buckskin thongs, the under side or bottom of the spoon covered with a coarse net work of the same material. He has one in each hand, and the ball, about the size of a large marble, is held between the spoons and thrown with an overhand rotary motion, separating the spoons, when the top of the circle is reached.

The game is this: two poles are set up, each about seventeen feet high and a foot apart at the bottom, widening to three feet at top. At the distance of two hundred yards, two similar poles are set up facing these. To strike the poles, or throw the ball between them counts one, and twelve is game. An umpire and starter takes the ball, advances to a mark equi-distant from each end of the course,

and throws it vertically into the air; it is caught, or falling upon the ground is eagerly struggled for and thrown toward the desired point. We saw some throw the ball the whole distance.

At each brace of poles, judges are stationed, who, armed with pistols, keep close watch, and whenever a count is made fire their pistols. The ball is then taken and started anew.

Among the players, are the runners, the throwers, and those who throw themselves in the way and baffle the player who succeeds in getting the ball.

The runners are the light active men, the throwers heavier, and then the fat men, who can neither throw nor run, stand ready to seize a thrower or upset a runner.

When a runner gets the ball, he starts at full speed towards the poles; if intercepted, he throws the ball to a friend, a thrower, perhaps, he is knocked down, then begins the struggle for the ball; a scene of pushing, jostling, and striking with the ball sticks, or perhaps a wrestle or two, all attended with hard knocks and harder falls. Whilst looking on, one man was pitched upon his head and had his collar bone broken; another had part of his scalp knocked off, but it was all taken in good humour, and what, among white men, would inevitably lead to black eyes and bloody noses, here ended with the passage or possession of the ball, a good lesson in forbearance and amiability, worthy of imitation.

The combatants are stripped entirely naked except a breech cloth and moccasins, and gaudily painted; they fasten at the centre and small of the back, a horse's tail, gaily painted and arrayed like a tail that has been nicked by a jockey; some wore bouquets of

flowers instead of the tail, but these were evidently the exquisites of the party, which the rings worn in the ears, nose and under lips, and manner of arranging the hair — one having it cut to a point and drawn down over his right eye, whilst his left eye was painted green — clearly proved. The grotesque appearance of the players, the excitement, yells and shouts of the crowd, old and young, and the gaudy finery displayed, all combined to make an indelible impression upon our memories. The aged men of the tribe were the most noisy and excited. One old fellow, blind of an eye and seventy years old, was quite wild with excitement; shaking his red handkerchief, he continued to shout, hoo, ka, li — hoo, ka, li — catch, catch, when the ball was thrown, and chi, ca, ma, — good, when a count was made, until quite hoarse. Doubtless, like the old war horse at the sound of the bugle, he felt all the fire of his youth, as he entered into the full spirit of this truly and only Indian sport.

68. An Indian Fable

One pleasant evening, as Nan-nee-bo-zho walked along the banks of a lake, he saw a flock of ducks, sailing and enjoying themselves on the blue waters. He called to them:

"Ho! come with me into my lodge, and I will teach you to dance!" Some of the ducks said among themselves, "It is Nan-nee-bo-zho, let us not go." Others were of a contrary opinion, and his words being fair, and his voice insinuating, a few turned their faces towards the land. All the rest soon followed, and

with many pleasant quackings, trooped after him, and entered his lodge.

When there, he first took an Indian sack, with a wide mouth, which he tied by the strings around his neck, so that it would hang over his shoulders, having the mouth unclosed. Then placing himself in the centre of the lodge, he ranged the ducks in a circle around him.

"Now," said he, "you must all shut your eyes tight, whoever opens his eyes at all, something dreadful will happen to him. I will take my Indian flute and play upon it, and you will, at the word I shall give, open your eyes, and commence dancing, as you see me do."

The ducks obeyed, shutting their eyes tight, and keeping time to the music by stepping from one foot to the other, all impatient for the dancing to begin.

Presently a sound was heard like a smothered "quack," but the ducks did not dare to open their eyes.

Again, and again, the sound of the flute would be interrupted, and a gurgling cry of "qu-a-a-ck" be heard. There was one little duck, much smaller than the rest, who at this juncture, could not resist the temptation to open one eye, cautiously. She saw Nan-nee-bo-zho, as he played his flute, holding it with one hand, stoop a little at intervals and seize the duck nearest him, which he throttled and stuffed into the bag on his shoulders. So, edging a little out of the circle, and getting nearer the door which had been left partly open to admit the light, she cried out:

"Open your eyes — Nan-nee-bo-zho is choking you all and putting you into his bag!"

With that she flew, but the Nan-nee-bo-zho pounced upon her. His hand grasped her back, yet, with des-

perate force, she released herself and gained the open air. Her companions flew, quacking and screaming after her. Some escaped, and some fell victims to the sprite.

The little duck had saved her life, but she had lost her beauty. She ever after retained the attitude she had been forced into, in her moment of danger — her back pressed down in the centre, and her head and neck unnaturally stretched forward into the air.

69. A Great Many Crullers needed

By Mrs. Juliette A. Kinzie (1830)

At an early hour the next morning I had quite a levee of the Ho-tshung-rah matrons. They seated themselves in a circle on the floor, and I was sorry to observe that the application of a little soap and water to their blankets had formed no part of their holiday preparations. There being no one to interpret, I thought I would begin the conversation in a way intelligible to themselves, so I brought out of the sideboard a china dish, filled with the nice brown crullers, over which I had grated, according to custom, a goodly quantity of white sugar. I handed it to the first of the circle. She took the dish from my hand, and deliberately pouring all the cakes into the corner of her blanket, returned it to me empty. "She must be a most voracious person," thought I, "but I will manage better the next time." I refilled the dish, and approached the next one, taking care to keep a fast hold

of it as I offered the contents, of which I supposed she would modestly take one. Not so, however. She scooped out the whole with her two hands, and, like the former, bestowed them in her blanket. My sense of politeness revolted at handing them out one by one, as we do to children, so I sat down to deliberate what was to be done, for evidently the supply would not long answer such an ample demand, and there would be more visitors anon.

While I was thus perplexed those who had received the cakes commenced a distribution, and the whole number was equitably divided among the company. But I observed they did not eat them. They passed their fingers over the grated sugar, looked in each other's faces, and muttered in low tones — there was evidently something they did not understand. Presently one more adventurous than the rest wet her fingers, and taking up a few grains of the sugar put it cautiously to her mouth.

"Tah-nee-zhoo-rah! (Sugar!) was her delighted exclamation, and they all broke out into a hearty laugh; it is needless to say that the cakes disappeared with all the celerity they deemed compatible with good-breeding. Never having seen any sugar but the brown or yellow maple, they had supposed the white substance to be salt, and for that reason had hesitated to taste it.

Their visit was prolonged until Shaw-nee-aw-kee made his appearance, and then, having been made happy by their various gifts, they all took their departure.

PART VI

AT SEA

70. "A Gallant Ship that flew the Stars and Stripes"

'Tis of a gallant Yankee ship that flew the stripes and stars,
And the whistling wind from the west-nor'-west blew through the pitch-pine spars,
With her starboard tacks aboard, my boys, she hung upon the gale ; .
On an autumn night we raised the light on the old Head of Kinsale.

This old song describes the course of the ship *Ranger*, Captain John Paul Jones, in 1778.

It was a clear and cloudless night, and the wind blew steady and strong,
As gayly over the sparkling deep our good ship bowled along;
With the foaming seas beneath her bow the fiery waves she spread,
And bending low her bosom of snow, she buried her lee cat-head.

There was no talk of short'ning sail by him who walked the poop,
And under the press of her pond'ring jib, the boom bent like a hoop!

And the groaning water-ways told the strain that held her stout main-tack,
But he only laughed as he glanced aloft at a white and silvery track.



JOHN PAUL JONES.

The mid-tide meets in the channel waves that flow from shore to shore,
And the mist hung heavy upon the land from Featherstone to Dunmore
And that sterling light in Tusker Rock where the old bell tolls each hour,
And the beacon light that shone so bright was quench'd on Waterford Tower.

The nightly robes our good ship wore were her three topsails set
Her spanker and her standing jib — the courses being fast;
"Now, lay aloft! my heroes bold, lose not a moment yet!"
And royals and top-gallant sails were quickly on each mast.

What looms upon our starboard bow? What hangs upon the breeze?
'Tis time our good ship hauled her wind abreast the old Saltee's,
For by her ponderous press of sail and by her consorts four
We saw our morning visitor was a British man-of-war.

Up spake our noble Captain then, as a shot ahead of us past —
"Haul snug your flowing courses! lay your topsail to the mast!"
Those Englishmen gave three loud hurrahs from the deck of their covered ark,
And we answered back by a solid broadside from the decks of our patriot bark.

"Out booms! out booms!" our skipper cried, "out booms and give her sheet,"
And the swiftest keel that was ever launched shot ahead of the British fleet,
And amidst a thundering shower of shot, with stun'-sails hoisting away,
Down the North Channel Paul Jones did steer just at the break of day.

71. How to Catch Whales

By Hector St. John Crevecœur (1752)

The vessels most proper for whale fishing, are brigs of about one hundred and fifty tons burden; they always man them with thirteen hands, in order that they may row two whale boats; the crews of which must necessarily consist of six, four at the oars, one standing on the bows with the harpoon, and the other at the helm. It is also necessary that there should be two of these boats, that if one should be destroyed in attacking the whale, the other, which is never engaged at the same time, may be ready to save the hands. Five of the thirteen are always Indians; the last of the complement remains on board to steer the vessel during the action. They have no wages; each draws a certain established share in partnership with the proprietor of the vessel; by which economy they are all proportionably concerned in the success of the enterprise, and all equally alert and vigilant. None of these whale-men ever exceed the age of forty: they look on those who are passed that period not to be possessed of all that vigour and agility which so adventurous a business requires. Indeed if you attentively consider the immense disproportion between the object assailed and the assailants; if you think on the diminutive size, and weakness of their frail vehicle; if you recollect the treachery of the element on which this scene is transacted; the sudden and unforeseen accidents of winds, you will readily acknowledge, that it must require the most consummate exertion of all the strength, agility, and judgment,

of which the bodies and the minds of men are capable, to undertake these adventurous encounters.

As soon as they arrive in those latitudes where they expect to meet with whales, a man is sent up to the mast head; if he sees one, he immediately cries out *awaite pawana*, here is a whale; they all remain still and silent until he repeats *pawana*, a whale, when in less than six minutes the two boats are launched, filled with every implement necessary for the attack. They row toward the whale with astonishing velocity; and as the Indians early became their fellow labourers in this new warfare, you can easily conceive, how their expressions became familiar on board the whale-boats. Formerly it often happened that whale vessels were manned with none but Indians and the master.

There are various ways of approaching the whale, according to their peculiar species; and this previous knowledge is of the utmost consequence. When these boats are arrived at a reasonable distance, one of them rests on its oars and stands off, as a witness of the approaching engagement; near the bows of the other the harpooner stands up, and on him principally depends the success of the enterprise. He wears a jacket closely buttoned, and round his head a handkerchief tightly bound: in his hands he holds the dreadful weapon, made of the best steel, marked sometimes with the name of their town, and sometimes with that of their vessel. To the shaft of this the end of a cord of due strength, coiled up with the utmost care in the middle of the boat, is firmly tied; the other end is fastened to the bottom of the boat. Thus prepared they row in profound silence, leaving the whole conduct of the enterprise to the harpooner

and to the steersman, attentively following their directions. When the former judges himself to be near enough to the whale, that is, at the distance of about fifteen feet, he bids them stop; launches it forth — she is struck: from her first movement they judge of her temper, as well as of their future success.

Sometimes in the immediate impulse of rage, she will attack the boat and demolish it with one stroke of her tail; in an instant the frail vehicle disappears and the assailants are immersed in the dreadful element. At other times she will dive and disappear from human sight; and every thing must then give way to her velocity; or else all is lost. Sometimes she will swim away as if untouched, and draw the cord with such swiftness that it will set the edge of the boat on fire by the friction. If she rises before she has run out the whole length, she is looked upon as a sure prey. The blood she has lost in her flight, weakens her so much, that if she sinks again, it is but for a short time; the boat follows her course with an almost equal speed. She soon re-appears; tired out at last she dies, and floats on the surface.

At other times it may happen, that she is not dangerously wounded, though she carries the harpoon fast in her body; when she will alternately dive and rise, and swim on with unabated vigour. She then soon reaches beyond the length of the cord, and carries the boat along with amazing velocity: this sudden impediment sometimes will retard her speed, at other times it only serves to rouse her anger, and to accelerate her progress. The harpooner, with the axe in his hands, stands ready. When he observes that the bows of the boat are greatly pulled down by the diving whale, and that it begins to sink deep and to

take much water, he brings the axe almost in contact with the cord; he pauses, still flattering himself that she will relax; but the moment grows critical, unavoidable danger approaches: sometimes men more intent on gain, than on the preservation of their lives, will run great risks; and it is wonderful how far these people have carried their daring courage at this awful moment! But it is vain to hope, their lives must be saved, the cord is cut, the boat rises again. If after thus getting loose, she re-appears, they will attack and wound her a second time. She soon dies, and when dead she is towed alongside of their vessel, where she is fastened.



A WHALER'S OUTFIT.

72. A Sea Voyage

By Abigail Adams (1784)

On board ship Active. Latitude 44. Longitude 34.
Tuesday, 6 July, 1784. From the Ocean.

MY DEAR SISTER,

I HAVE been sixteen days at sea, and have not attempted to write a single letter. 'Tis true, I have kept a journal whenever I was able; but that must be close locked up, unless I was sure to hand it you with safety.

'Tis said of Cato, the Roman Censor, that one of the three things, which he regretted during his life, was going once by sea when he might have made his journey by land. I fancy the philosopher was not proof against that most disheartening, dispiriting malady, sea-sickness. Of this I am very sure, that no lady would ever wish a second time to try the sea, were the objects of her pursuit within the reach of a land journey.

The vessel is very deep loaded with oil and potash. The oil leaks, the potash smokes and ferments. All adds to the flavor. When you add to all this the horrid dirtiness of the ship, the slovenliness of the steward, and the unavoidable slopping and spilling occasioned by the tossing of the ship, I am sure you will be thankful that the pen is not in the hand of Swift or Smollet, and still more so that you are far removed from the scene. No sooner was I able to move, than I found it necessary to make a bustle amongst the waiters, and demand a cleaner abode. By this time, Briesler was upon his feet, and, as I found I might reign mistress on board without any

offence, I soon exerted my authority with scrapers, mops, brushes, infusions of vinegar, &c., and in a few hours you would have thought yourself in a different ship. Since which, our abode is much more tolerable, and the gentlemen all thank me for my care. Our captain is an admirable seaman, always attentive to his sails and his rigging; keeps the deck all night; careful of everybody on board; watchful that they run no risk; kind and humane to his men, who are all as still and quiet as any private family; nothing cross or dictatorial in his manners; a much more agreeable man than I expected to find him. He cannot be called a polished gentleman; but he is, so far as I have seen, a very clever man.

I have accustomed myself to writing a little every day, when I was able, so that a small motion of the ship does not render it more unintelligible than usual; but there is no time, since I have been at sea, when the ship is what we call still, that its motion is not equal to the moderate rocking of a cradle. As to wind and weather, since we came out, they have been very fortunate for us in general. We have had three calm days, and two days contrary wind, with a storm, I called it; but the sailors say it was only a breeze. This was upon the Banks of Newfoundland, the wind at east; through the day we could not sit in our chairs, only as some gentleman sat by us with his arm fastened into ours, and his feet braced against a table or chair, that was lashed down with ropes; bottle, mugs, plates, crashing to pieces, first on one side and then on the other; the sea running mountain-high, and knocking against the sides of the vessel as though it would burst them. When I became so fatigued with the incessant motion as not to be

able to sit any longer, I was assisted into my cabin, where I was obliged to hold myself in with all my might the remainder of the night.

Our accommodations on board are not what I could wish, or hoped for. Our state-rooms are about half as large as cousin Betsey's little chamber, with two cabins in each. This place has a small grated window, which opens into the companion-way, and by this is the only air admitted.

If the wind and weather continue as favorable as they have hitherto been, we expect to make our passage in thirty days, which is going a hundred miles a day.

8 July.

A wet, drizzly day, but we must not complain, for we have a fair wind, our sails all square, and go at seven knots an hour. I have made a great acquisition. I have learnt the names and places of all the masts and sails; and the Captain compliments me by telling me that he is sure I know well enough how to steer, to take a turn at the helm. I may do pretty well in fair weather, but 'tis your masculine spirits that are made for storms. I love the tranquil scenes of life.

I went last evening upon deck, at the invitation of Mr. Foster, to view that phenomenon of Nature, a blazing ocean. A light flame spreads over the ocean, in appearance, with thousands of thousands of sparkling gems, resembling our fire-flies in a dark night. It has a most beautiful appearance.

10 July.

Yesterday was a very pleasant day. Very little wind, but a fine sun and a smooth sea. I spent most of the day upon deck, reading; it was not, however,

so warm but a baize gown was very comfortable. The ship has gradually become less irksome to me. If our cook was but tolerably clean, I could relish my food. But he is a great, dirty, lazy negro, with no more knowledge of cookery than a savage, nor any kind of order in the distribution of his dishes; but on they come, higgledy-piggledy, with a leg of pork all bristly; a quarter of an hour after, a pudding; or, perhaps, a pair of roast fowls, first of all, and then will follow one by one a piece of beef, and, when dinner is nearly completed, a plate of potatoes. Such a fellow is a real imposition upon the passengers. But gentlemen know but little about the matter, and, if they can get enough to eat five times a day, all goes well. We ladies have not eaten, upon our whole passage, more than just enough to satisfy nature, or to keep body and soul together.

17 July.

Give me joy, my dear sister; we have sounded to-day and found bottom, fifty-five fathom. We have seen, through the course of the day, twenty different sail, and spoke with a small boat upon a smuggling expedition, which assured us we were within the Channel.

18 July.

This day four weeks we came on board. Are you not all calculating to-day that we are near the land? Happily, you are not wrong in your conjectures. I do not despair of seeing it yet before night, though our wind is very small and light. The captain has just been down to advise us, as the vessel is so quiet, to get what things we wish to carry on shore into our small trunks. He hopes to land us at Portsmouth, seventy miles distant from London, to-mor-

row or next day ; from thence we are to proceed, in post-chaises, to London. The ship may be a week in the channel before she will be able to get up.

73. The Pleasures of Impressment

By Ebenezer Smith Thomas (1800)

I sailed from Charleston, (bound to Liverpool, in the month of June,) in an old worn out ship, called the *Mercury*, Captain Waldron. We soon discovered that our ship leaked very badly ; so much so, that it took fifteen minutes in every hour to keep her free. This made very hard duty for the crew, which was not a very strong one ; for seamen were as scarce as ships. Fortunately the winds were light and fair — nothing remarkable occurred until we arrived on the Banks of Newfoundland, when, on the fourth of July, the weather was so cold that the only way we could make ourselves comfortable was by lying in bed. As is not unusual on the banks, the weather was very thick — we could not see an hundred yards ahead.

The next morning, just at daylight, the mate, whose watch it was, rushed into the cabin, exclaiming, at the top of his voice, "Captain Waldron, there is land close on board!" The Captain was on deck in a moment, and I, who was the only passenger, was not long after him. To be close on shore, when by our reckoning we should be near the middle of the Atlantic, was enough to alarm the stoutest heart, and every soul appeared on deck in a minute. It was now the twilight of dawn, and the only object at all visible, was a mountain hanging apparently over us — not of

earth, or of rocks, but very much resembling the latter — a mountain of ice; besides which, as the fog cleared away, we found ourselves surrounded by floating islands of the same material; so that it was luff, or bear away, all day, to keep from running foul of them. Fortunately for us, before sunset we had them all astern, with a clear course and fair breeze. Had daylight been one hour later, we should all inevitably have perished, as the immense mass was directly in our course, and would have been felt as soon as seen in the darkness of the night. Its altitude was upwards of two hundred feet.

With our regular "pump music" one-fourth of the time, night and day, we at length made Cape Clear in Ireland; it was in the afternoon, in the latter part of July. About thirty whales passed us within less than one hundred feet of our stern. Fifteen or twenty minutes later, from the situation they were in, they might have done us much mischief. We entered the Cape that evening. At the first go off, we lost our kedge and hawser, after which we had to let go the best bower, and in this way we were eight days "tiding it up to Liverpool," from the Cape. On the sixth day we took a pilot on board.

On the forenoon of the seventh, a ship, whose drum we had heard for three or four nights preceding, made her appearance on our weather beam, at about a mile distance, and sent her compliments to us in the shape of an eighteen pound shot that passed through our main-top sail. Capt. Waldron immediately ordered it to be backed, and in that position to await further intelligence from the stranger. We had not to wait long, for, in less than four minutes, there came another shot that passed about four feet over the head of the all right.

The British were accustomed to enlist by force any able-bodied seamen whom they found, and often took American citizens in defiance of

man at the helm, and through the spanker. Our ship was then hove to, and was soon boarded from our new acquaintance, by a boat having two officers and six men, who reported their ship "the sloop of war *Reynard*, Captain Spicer, on the impress service." Our crew consisted of the captain, two mates, eight hands, a steward and cook. Two of the hands were broken-down discharged English seamen, one of whom had not been able to do duty for a month.

The lieutenant took command of our ship, ordered the crew aft, and proceeded to overhaul them. He ordered into the boat the steward and cook, both slaves belonging to Charleston, a Portuguese sailor, and Jonathan Williams, a native of Maine; and as I walked on one side the quarter-deck while they had possession of the other, I overheard a part of a consultation between the two officers, the subject of which was, whether they should not press me with the others; and I believe I was indebted for my escape to my unseamanlike appearance — a long coat and breeches. They then left us, without hands to work our ship, which the pilot immediately brought to anchor, and sent his boat, then in attendance, up to Liverpool, to procure hands for that purpose. This was a busy day with the *Reynard*. Head winds having prevailed for a fortnight, a large outward bound fleet had collected, consisting of upwards of one hundred and fifty sail, more than one hundred of which were Americans, and all armed, this being just at the close of "John Adams' hot water war with France."

From 1798 to 1800 there was a naval war with France.

Reynard was too cunning to meddle with these Yankees, who had all arranged themselves under the command of Captain King, of the ship *Kingston*, of Philadelphia, whom they had appointed Commodore.

They would have been ugly customers for a dozen sloops of war. The *Kingston* had two and twenty guns, and the others from six to sixteen each. The next morning a boat belonging to the *Reynard*, that has lost sight of her in the night, came along side of us, with a midshipman and four hands, and requested to be taken to Liverpool. This was agreed to, provided they, all hands, went to work and got our ship under way. No sooner said than done. The poor fellows were glad of the chance, as they had been rowing all night to overtake their ship, which had sent them to board some "North Countrymen," and left them to get on board again as they could. In the afternoon we got up to town, and went into Queen's dock, which, notwithstanding the fleet that had so recently left, was still crowded with American shipping, two hundred and fifty-six sail of which hoisted the stars and stripes on our nation's birth-day, about three weeks before.

74. Loyal Even to Death

By Thomas Truxtun (1800)

This is the official account of an act of great gallantry. James Jarvis was only thirteen years old.

At half past seven A.M. the road of Basseterre, Guadaloupe, bearing east, five leagues distance, I saw a sail in the southeast standing to the westward, which, from her situation, I at first took for a large ship from Martinico, and hoisted English colors, on giving chase, by way of inducement for her to come down and speak me, which would have saved a long chase to leeward of my intended cruising ground. When she did not attempt to alter her course, I examined her more attentively as we approached her,

and discovered her to be a heavy French frigate, mounting at least fifty-four guns. I immediately gave orders for the ship to be cleared, ready for action, and hauled down the English colors. At noon the wind became light, and I observed the chase, that we had before been gaining fast on, held way with us, but I was determined to continue the pursuit, though the running to leeward, I was convinced, would be attended with many serious disadvantages, especially if the object of my wishes was not gratified.

At one o'clock, P.M., on the next day, the wind was somewhat fresher than the noon preceding, and appeared likely to continue; our prospect of bringing the enemy to action began to brighten, as I perceived we were coming up with the chase fast, and every inch of canvas was set that could be of service, except the bag reefs, which I kept in the top-sails, in case of the enemy, finding an escape from our thunder impracticable, should haul on a wind, and give us fair battle; but this did not prove to be her commander's intention; I, however, got within hail of him at eight P.M.; hoisted our ensign, and had the candles in the bottle lanterns all lighted, and was in the lee gangway, ready to speak him, and to demand a surrender of his ship to the United States of America, when, at that instant, he commenced a fire from his stern and quarter guns, directed at our rigging and spars. No parley being then necessary, I sent my principal aid-de-camp, Mr. Vandyke, to the different officers commanding divisions on the main battery, to repeat strictly my orders before given, not to throw away a single charge of powder and shot, but to take good aim, and to fire directly into the

hull of the enemy, and load principally with two round shot, and, now and then, with a round shot and a stand of grape; to encourage the men at their quarters, and to cause or suffer no noise or confusion whatever, but to load and fire as fast as possible, when it could be done with certain effect.

These orders were given, and in a few moments I gained a position on his weather quarter, that enabled us to return, effectually, his salute. Thus as close, and as sharp an action as ever was fought between two frigates, commenced, and continued until within a few minutes of one, A.M., when the enemy's fire was completely silenced, and he was again sheering off. It was at this moment that I considered him as my prize, and was trimming, in the best manner I could, my much shattered sails, when I found the mainmast was totally unsupported with rigging, every shroud was shot away, and some of them, in many places, so as to render stoppers useless, which in fact could not be applied with effect. I then gave orders for all the men to be sent up from the gun deck, to endeavor to secure the mast, in order that we might get alongside of the enemy again as soon as possible; but every effort was in vain, for it went over the side in a few minutes after, and carried with it the topmen, among whom was an amiable young gentleman, who commanded the main top, Mr. James Jarvis, son of James Jarvis, Esq. of New York. This young gentleman, it seems, was apprised of his danger by an old seaman, but he had already so much the principle of an officer engrafted on his mind, not to leave his quarters, that he replied, if the mast went, they must go with it; which was the case, and only one of them was saved. I regret much his

loss, as a promising young officer and amiable young man, as well as on account of a long intimacy that has subsisted between his father and myself, but have great satisfaction in finding that I have lost no other men, and only two or three were slightly wounded; out of thirty-nine of the crew killed and wounded, fourteen were killed, and twenty-five were wounded. As soon as the mainmast went, every effort was made to clear the wreck from the ship as soon as possible, which was effected in about an hour; and, as her security was then the great object, since it was impossible to pursue the enemy, I immediately bore away for Jamaica, for repairs.

I should be wanting in common justice were I to omit here to journalize the steady attention to order, and the great exertion and bravery shown by all my officers, seamen, and marines, in this action, many of whom I had sufficiently tried before on a similar occasion (the capture of the Insurgent), and all their names are recorded in the muster-roll I sent to the Secretary of the Navy, dated the 19th of December last, signed by myself.

THOMAS TRUXTUN.

75. Letters from a Boy at Sea

BY BASIL HALL (1802)

DEAR FATHER,

After you left us, I went down into the mess-room; it is a place about twenty feet long, with a table in the middle of it, and wooden seats upon which we sit. When I came down, there were a

great many cups and saucers upon the table. A man came in, and poured hot water into the tea-pot. There are about fourteen of us mess at the same time. We were very merry in this dark hole, where we had only two candles.

We come down here, and sit when we like; and at other times go upon deck. At about ten o'clock we had supper upon bread and cheese, and a kind of pudding which we liked very much. Some time after this I went to a hammock, which was not my own, as mine was not ready, there not being enough of clues at it, but I will have it to-night. I got in at last. It was very queer to find myself swinging about in this uncouth manner, for there was only about a foot of space between my face and the roof; so, of course, I broke my head a great many times on the different posts in the cock-pit, where all the midshipmen sleep. After having got in, you may be sure I did not sleep very well, when all the people were making such a noise going to bed in the dark, and the ship in such confusion. I fell asleep at last, but was always disturbed by the quarter-master coming down to awake the midshipmen who were to be on guard during the night. He comes up to their bedsides and calls them; so I, not being accustomed to it, was always awaked too. I had some sleep, however, but, early in the morning, was again roused up by the men beginning to work.

There is a large hole which comes down from the decks, all the way through to the hold, where they let down the casks. The foot of the hammock that I slept in was just at the hole, so I saw the casks all coming down close by me. I got up at half-past seven, and went into the berth (our mess-

room), and we were all waiting for breakfast till eight, when the man who serves and brings in the dishes for the mess came down in a terrible passion, saying, that as he was boiling the kettle at the stove, the master-at-arms had thrown water upon the fire and put it out. All this was because the powder was coming on board. So we had to want our breakfast for once. But we had a piece of bread and butter; and as we were eating it, the master-at-arms came down, and said that our candles were to be taken away: so we had to eat our dry meal in the dark.

I am much better pleased with my situation than I suspected I would at my first coming on board. We have in our mess four Scotchmen, six Englishmen, and two Irish, so that we make a very pleasant company down in the cock-pit. We dine at twelve, and breakfast at eight in the morning. At breakfast we get tea and sea cake: at dinner we have either beef, pork, or pudding. But when we come into a harbour or near one, there are always numbers of boats come out with all sorts of vegetables and fresh meat, which are not left long in the boat, for the people all run, and buy up the soft bread and fresh provisions.

We midshipmen are upon watch every night for four hours together; we do nothing but walk the quarter-deck, if the ship is not sailing. There is always half the crew upon deck when the ship is sailing, and we and the lieutenants order them to do so and so about the ropes and sails. All the men's hammocks are brought upon deck, and laid in places at the side for the purpose, both to give room for the men to work under the decks, and to give them air.

All the decks are washed and well scrubbed every morning, which is right, as they are often dirtied.

We were very near all being destroyed, and blown up last night, by an alarming fire on board. As I was standing making my hammock, about ten o'clock, near two others making theirs, we were alarmed by seeing a large burst of sparks come from one corner of the cock-pit. Without going to see what was the matter, I ran into our berth, or place where we mess, and got hold of all the pots of beer which the midshipmen were going to drink. I returned with these, and threw them on the fire, while others ran for water.

When I came back, I saw the purser's steward covered with fire, and rubbing it off him as fast as he could, with a pile of burning sheets and blankets lying at his feet. One of us ran up to the quarter-deck, and seizing the fire-buckets that were nearest, filled them, and brought them down. We also got some of the men out of their hammocks, but took good care not to awaken any of the rest, for fear of bustle and confusion.

The sentry, as soon as he discovered the smell, went down to the captain and lieutenants, who immediately came to the cock-pit, and whispered out "Silence!" They then got more buckets of water, and quenched the flames, which, as they thought, were only in the purser's steward's cabin. But one of the men opened the door of the steward's store-room, and saw a great deal of fire lying on the floor. Water, of course, was applied, and it also was quenched; the store-room was then well flooded.

The captain ordered the purser's steward to be put in irons directly, as well as his boy, who had

stuck the light up in the cabin. The captain next went with the master-at-arms into the powder magazine, which was close to the purser's steward's cabin, and found the bulkhead or partition half-burnt through by the fire in the cabin!

All this mischief was occasioned by sticking a naked light upon the beam above the cabin, from whence it had fallen down and set fire to the sheets. The steward, in trying to smother it with more, had set fire to the whole bundle, which he then flung in a mass into the store-room. There was a watch kept all night near the spot. Nobody has been hurt.

I am very sorry for the purser's steward, for he was a very good-natured and obliging man, and much liked by all of us. He gave us plums, when we asked them from him. He is broke, I fear. I will give you the issue in my next letter.

76. Naval Ballads

CONSTITUTION AND GUERRIÈRE

(August 19, 1812)

It oft times has been told,
That the British seamen bold,
Could flog the tars of France so neat and handy, oh!
But they never found their match,
Till the Yankees did them catch,
Oh, the Yankee boys for fighting are the dandy, oh!

The Guerrière, a frigate bold,
On the foaming ocean rolled,
Commanded by proud Dacres, the grandee, oh!

With as choice a British crew,
As a rammer ever drew,
Could flog the Frenchmen two to one so handy, oh!

When this frigate hove in view,
Says proud Dacres to his crew,
"Come clear ship for action and be handy, oh!
To the weather gage, boys, get her,"
And to make his men fight better,
Gave them to drink gun-powder mixed with brandy, oh!

Then Dacres loudly cries,
"Make this Yankee ship your prize,
You can in thirty minutes, neat and handy, oh!
Twenty-five's enough I'm sure,
And if you'll do it in a score,
I'll treat you to a double share of brandy, oh!"

The British shot flew hot,
Which the Yankees answered not,
Till they got within the distance they called handy, oh!
"Now," says Hull unto his crew,
"Boys, let's see what we can do,
If we take this boasting Briton we're the dandy, oh!"

The first broadside we pour'd
Carried her mainmast by the board,
Which made this loftly frigate look abandon'd, oh!
Then Dacres shook his head,
And to his officers said,
"Lord, I didn't think those Yankees were so handy,
oh!"



PERRY'S VICTORY.

Our second told so well
That their fore and mizzen fell,
Which dous'd the Royal ensign neat and handy, oh!
"By George!" says he, "we're done,"
And they fired a lee gun,
While the Yankees struck up Yankee Doodle Dandy, oh!

Then Dacres came on board,
To deliver up his sword,
Tho' loth was he to part with it, it was so handy, oh!
"Oh, keep your sword," says Hull,
"For it only makes you dull,
Cheer up and take a little drink of brandy, oh!"

Now, fill your glasses full,
And we'll drink to Captain Hull,
And so merrily we'll push about the brandy, oh!
John Bull may toast his fill,
But let the world say what they will,
The Yankee boys for fighting are the dandy, oh!

PERRY'S VICTORY

(September 10, 1813)

We sailed to and fro in Erie's broad lake,
To find British bullies or get into their wake,
When we hoisted our canvas with true Yankee speed,
And the brave Captain Perry our squadron did lead.

We sailed thro' the lake, boys, in search of the foe,
In the cause of Columbia our brav'ry to show,
To be equal in combat was all our delight,
As we wished the proud Britons to know we could fight.

And whether like Yeo, boys, they'd taken affright,
We could see not, nor find them by day or by night;
So cruising we went in a glorious cause,
In defence of our rights, our freedom, and laws.

At length to our liking six sails hove in view,
Huzzah! says brave Perry, huzzah! says his crew,
And then for the chase, boys, with our brave little crew,
We fell in with the bullies and gave them "burgoo."

Though the force was unequal, determined to fight,
We brought them to action before it was night;
We let loose our thunder, our bullets did fly,
"Now give them your shot, boys," our commander did cry.

We gave them a broadside, our cannon to try,
"Well done," says brave Perry, "for quarter they'll cry,
Shot well home, my brave boys, they shortly shall see,
That quite brave as they are, still braver are we."

Then we drew up our squadron, each man full of fight,
And put the proud Britons in a terrible plight.
The brave Perry's movements will prove fully as bold,
As the fam'd Admiral Nelson's prowess of old.

The conflict was sharp, boys, each man to his guns,
For our country, her glory, the vict'ry was won,
So six sail (the whole fleet) was our fortune to take,
Here's a health to brave Perry, who governs the Lake.

77. On Board the Guerrière

By Captain William Orme (1812)

This is an account of the capture of the *Guerrière* written by an American who happened to be present when the battle began.

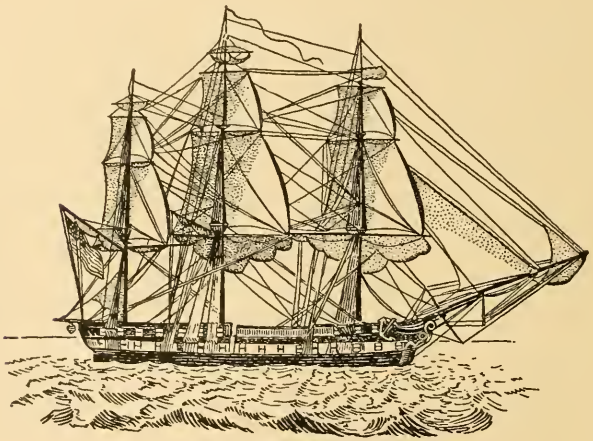
I commanded the American brig *Betsey*, in the year 1812, and was returning home from Naples, Italy, to Boston. When near the western edge of the Grand Bank of Newfoundland, on the 10th of August, 1812, I fell in with the British frigate *Guerrière*, Captain Dacres, and was captured by him. Myself and a boy were taken on board of the frigate; the remainder of my officers and men were left in the *Betsey*, and sent into Halifax, N.S., as a prize to the *Guerrière*.

On the 19th of the same month, the wind being fresh from the northward, the *Guerrière* was under double-reefed topsails during all the forenoon of this day. At 2 P.M., we discovered a large sail to windward, bearing about North from us. We soon made her out to be a frigate. She was steering off from the wind, with her head to the Southwest, evidently with the intention of cutting us off as soon as possible.

Signals were soon made by the *Guerrière*, but as they were not answered, the conclusion of course was, that she was either a French or an American frigate. Captain Dacres appeared anxious to ascertain her character, and after looking at her for that purpose, handed me his spy-glass, requesting me to give him my opinion of the stranger. I soon saw from the peculiarity of her sails, and from her general appearance, that she was, without doubt, an American frigate, and communicated the same to Captain Dacres. He immediately replied, that he thought she came down too boldly for an American, but soon after

added, "The better he behaves, the more honor we shall gain by taking him."

The two ships were rapidly approaching each other, when the *Guerrière* backed her main-topsail, and waited for her opponent to come down, and commence the action. He then set an English flag at each mast-head, beat to quarters, and made ready for



THE "CONSTITUTION."

the fight. When the strange frigate came down to within two or three miles distance, he hauled upon the wind, took in all his light sails, reefed his topsails, and deliberately prepared for action. It was now about five o'clock in the afternoon, when he filled away and ran down for the *Guerrière*. At this moment, Captain Dacres politely said to me: "Captain Orme, as I suppose you do not wish to fight against your own countrymen, you are at liberty to go below

the water-line." It was not long after this before I retired from the quarter-deck to the cock-pit.

Of course I saw no more of the action until the firing ceased, but I heard and felt much of its effects; for soon after I left the deck, the firing commenced on board the *Guerrière*, and was kept up almost constantly until about six o'clock, when I heard a tremendous explosion from the opposing frigate. The effect of her shot seemed to make the *Guerrière* reel, and tremble as though she had received the shock of an earthquake. Immediately after this, I heard a tremendous crash on deck, and was told the mizzenmast was shot away. In a few moments afterward, the cock-pit was filled with wounded men.

At about half-past six o'clock in the evening, after the firing had ceased, I went on deck, and there beheld a scene which it would be difficult to describe: all the *Guerrière's* masts were shot away, and as she had no sails to steady her, she lay rolling like a log in the trough of the sea. The decks were covered with blood, the gun tackles were not made fast, and several of the guns got loose, and were surging to and fro from one side to the other.

Some of the petty officers and seamen, after the action, got liquor, and were intoxicated; and what with the groans of the wounded, the noise and confusion of the enraged survivors on board of the ill-fated ship, rendered the whole scene fearful beyond description.

78. Capture of the Guerrière

By Captain Isaac Hull (1812)

Here we have an account of the same naval fight by the commander of the American vessel.

Sir,

I have the honour to inform you, that on the 19th instant, at 2 P.M., with the *Constitution* under my command, a sail was discovered from the mast-head, but at such a distance, we could not tell what she was. All sail was instantly made in chase, and we soon came up with her. At 3 P.M. we could plainly see that she was a ship on the starboard tack, under easy sail, close on a wind; at half past 3 P. M. we made her out to be a frigate; we continued the chase until we were within about three miles, when I ordered the light sails taken in, the courses hauled up, and the ship cleared for action. At this time the chase had backed his main top-sail, waiting for us to come down.

As soon as the *Constitution* was ready for action, I bore down with an intention to bring him to close action immediately; but on our coming within gun-shot she gave us a broadside and filled away, and wore, giving us a broadside on the other tack, but without effect; her shot falling short. She continued wearing and manœuvring for about three quarters of an hour, to get a raking position, but finding she could not, she bore up, and run under top-sails and jib, with the wind on the quarter.

Immediately we made sail to bring the ship up with her, and five minutes before 6 P.M. we were along side within half pistol shot; then we commenced a heavy fire from all our guns, double shotted with round and grape, and so well directed were they,

and so warmly kept up, that in fifteen minutes his mizzen-mast went by the board, and his main-yard in the slings, and the hull, rigging and sails were very much torn to pieces. The fire was kept up with equal warmth for fifteen minutes longer, when his main-mast and fore-mast went, taking with them every spar, excepting the bowsprit; on seeing this we ceased firing, so that in thirty minutes after we got fairly along side the enemy she surrendered, and had not a spar standing, and her hull below and above water was so shattered, that a few more broadsides must have carried her down.

After informing you that so fine a ship as the *Guerrière*, commanded by an able and experienced officer, had been totally dismasted, and otherwise cut to pieces, so as to make her not worth towing into port, in the short space of thirty minutes, you can have no doubt of the gallantry and good conduct of the officers and ship's company I have the honour to command. It only remains, therefore, for me to assure you, that they all fought with great bravery; and it gives me great pleasure to say, that from the smallest boy in the ship to the oldest seaman, not a look of fear was seen. They all went into action, giving three cheers, and requesting to be laid close along side the enemy.

Enclosed I have the honour to send you a list of killed and wounded on board the *Constitution*, and a report of the damages she has sustained; also, a list of the killed and wounded on board the enemy, with his quarter bill, &c.

I have the honour to be, with very great respect, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

ISAAC HULL.

79. The Battle of Lake Erie

By Captain Taylor (1813)

On the morning of the 10th instant at sunrise, they were discovered from Put-in-Bay, where I lay at anchor with the squadron under my command. We got under way, with the wind light at southwest and stood for them. At ten o'clock the wind hauled to southeast and brought us to windward; we formed the line and brought up. At fifteen minutes before twelve the enemy commenced firing; at five minutes before twelve the action commenced on our part. Their fire was very destructive, owing to their long guns, and was mostly directed to the *Lawrence*, so I made sail, and directed the other vessels to follow, for the purpose of closing with the enemy. Every brace and bow line was shot away, and she became unmanageable, notwithstanding the great exertions of the sailing master. In this situation she sustained the action upwards of two hours, within canister shot distance, and every gun was rendered useless, and a greater part of the crew either killed or wounded.

Finding she could no longer annoy the enemy, I left her in charge of Lieutenant Yarnall, who, I was convinced, from the bravery already displayed by him, would do what would comport with the honour of the flag. At half past two the wind sprang up, and Captain Elliot was enabled to bring his vessel, the *Niagara*, gallantly into close action; I immediately went on board her, when he anticipated my wish by volunteering to bring the schooners, which had been kept astern by the lightness of the wind, into close action. It was with unspeakable pain, that I

saw, soon after I got on board the *Niagara*, the flag of the *Lawrence* come down, although I was perfectly sensible that she had been defended to the last, and that to have continued to make a show of resistance would have been a wanton sacrifice of the remains of her brave crew.

But the enemy was not able to take possession of her, and circumstances soon permitted her flag again to be hoisted. At forty-five minutes past two, the signal was made for "close action." The *Niagara* was very little injured, so I determined to pass through the enemy's line, bore up and passed ahead of their two ships and a brig, and gave a raking fire to them from the starboard guns, and to a large schooner and sloop, from the larboard side, at half pistol shot distance. The smaller vessels at this time were within grape and canister distance, under the direction of Captain Elliot. They kept up a well directed fire until the two ships, a brig, and a schooner, surrendered. One schooner and a sloop made a vain attempt to escape.

Those officers and men who were immediately under my observation showed the greatest gallantry, and I have no doubt that all others conducted themselves as became American officers and seamen.

80. The Star-spangled Banner

By Francis Scott Key (1814)

O say, can you see by the dawn's early light,
What so proudly we hailed at the twilight's last gleaming?

Whose broad stripes and bright stars through the perilous fight,
On the ramparts we watched were so gallantly streaming;
And the rocket's red glare, the bombs bursting in air,
Gave proof through the night that our flag was still there.
O say, does the star-spangled banner yet wave
O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave?

On the shore dimly seen, through the mists of the deep,
Where the foe's haughty host in dread silence reposes,
What is that which the breeze, o'er the towering steep,
As it fitfully blows, half conceals, half discloses?
Now it catches the gleam of the morning's first beam,
In full glory reflected now shines on the stream.
'Tis the star-spangled banner! O long may it wave
O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave!

And where is that band who so vauntingly swore
That the havoc of war and the battle's confusion
A home and a country shall leave us no more?
Their blood has washed out their foul footsteps' pollution.
No refuge could save the hireling and slave,
From the terror of death and the gloom of the grave.
And the star-spangled banner in triumph shall wave
O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave!

O thus be it ever when freemen shall stand
Between their loved homes and the war's desolation;
Blest with vict'ry and peace, may the heaven-rescued land,
Praise the power that has made and preserved us a nation.
Then conquer we must, for our cause it is just.
And this be our motto: "In God is our trust."
And the star-spangled banner in triumph shall wave
O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave.

81. How the Privateer licked the Frigate

By Nathaniel Shaler (1813)

This is the story of a privateer, a private vessel commissioned by the American governor to capture British vessels and fight them if necessary.

Two days after dispatching the *Nereid*, I took a whaleman from London, bound for the South Seas, but as she was of no value, I took out such stores as I could stow, and as I was much lumbered with prisoners and baggage, I put them on board, and ordered her for Falmouth. The chasing of this ship had taken me some distance from my ground, and owing to calms, I could not regain it until the 25th of last month, when at sunrise three ships were discovered ahead. We made all sail in chase. The wind was light, and we came up with them slowly. On a nearer approach, they proved to be two ships and a

brig. One of the ships had all the appearance of a large transport, and from her manœuvres, seemed to have concerted measures for mutual defence. The large ship appeared to take the bulk of an action. Boats were seen passing to and from her. She had boarding nettings almost up to her tops, with her topmast studding-sail booms out: and sails at their ends, ready for running, as if prepared for a runaway fight.

Her ports appeared to be painted, and she had something on deck, resembling a merchant's boat. After all this what do you think she was? Have a little patience, and I will tell you. At 3 P.M. a sudden squall struck us from the northward, and since the ship had not yet received it, before I could get our light sails in, and almost before I could turn round, I was under the guns, (not of a transport) but of a large frigate, and not more than a quarter of a mile from her.

I immediately hauled down English colors, which I previously had up, set three American ensigns, trimmed our sails by the wind, and commenced a brisk fire from our little battery, but this was returned with woeful interest. Her first broadside killed two men and wounded six others (two of them severely, one had since died); it also blew up one of my salt boxes, with two nine-pound cartridges; this communicated fire to a number of pistols and three tube boxes which were lying on the companion way, all of which exploded, and some of the tubes penetrated through a crevice under the companion leaf, and found their way to the cabin floor; but that was wet, and the fire-screen up, so no further accident took place. This, together with the fire from the frigate, I assure you, made warm work on the *Tompkins*' quarter-deck,

but thanks to her heels, and the exertions of my brave officers and crew, I still have the command of her.

When the frigate opened her fire on me it was about half-past three. I was then a little abaft her beam. To have attempted to tack in a hard squall, would at least have exposed me to a raking fire, and to have attempted it, and failed to do so, would have been attended with the inevitable loss of the schooner. I therefore thought it most prudent to take her fire on the tack on which I was, and this I was exposed to from the position I have mentioned, until I had passed her bow; all the while she was standing on with me, and almost as fast as ourselves, and such a tune as was played round my ears, I assure you, I never wish to hear again on the same key.

At four his shot began to fall short of us. At half-past four the wind was dying away, the enemy still held it, and his ship began to reach us. We got out sweeps, and turned all hands to. I also threw all the lumber from the deck, and about two thousand pound weight of shot from the after hold. From about five P.M., all his shot fell short of us. At twenty-five minutes past five the enemy hove about, and I was glad to get so clear of one of the most quarrelsome companions that I ever met with. After the first broadside from the frigate, not a shot struck the hull of the *Tompkins*, but the water was literally in foam all around her.

The moment before the squall struck us, I told Mr. Farnum that she was too heavy for us, and he went forward with his glass to take another look, when the squall struck the schooner as if by magic, and we were up with her, before we could get in our light

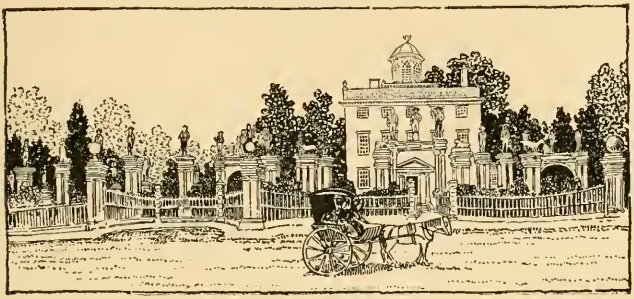
sails. My officers conducted themselves in a way that would have done honor to a more permanent service. Mr. . Farnum, first Lieutenant, conducted himself with his usual vigor. Mr. Atchison, sailing-master, performed his part in the style of a brave and accomplished seaman. Messrs. Miller and Dodd, second and third Lieutenants, were not immediately under my eye, but the precision and promptitude with which all my orders were executed, is sufficient proof that they were to be relied upon. Mr. Thomas, boatswain, and Mr. Casewell, master's-mate, were particularly active, and deserve encouragement.

The name of one of my poor fellows who was killed ought to be registered on the book of fame, and remembered with reverence as long as bravery is considered a virtue. He was a black man, by the name of John Johnson; a twenty-four pound shot struck him in the hip, and took away all the lower part of his body. In this state the poor, brave fellow lay on the deck, and several times exclaimed to his shipmates, "Fire away, boys, neber haul de color down." The other was also a black man, by the name of John Davis, and was struck in much the same way: he fell near me, and several times requested to be thrown overboard, saying he was only in the way of the others. While America has such sailors, she has little to fear from the tyrants of the ocean.

From the circumstance of the enemy's shot being twenty-four which I assure you was the case, as we have felt and weighed them, I am of opinion that it was the *Laurel*, a new frigate, which I had information of. A gentleman whom I took, told me she was in the fleet; that she was built and manned for the purpose to cope with our frigates; that if she got sight

of me, she would certainly take me, as she was the fastest sailer he ever saw.

I send you a list of the killed and wounded; in every thing else we are in good order and high spirits.



THE HOUSE OF TIMOTHY DEXTER.

82. Going Aloft

By Frederic Stanhope Hill (1842)

"Now look here, you Bob," said the mate, one fine afternoon, "look up aloft there, my lad; do you see that royal yard?"

I looked up, as he bade me, at the royal masthead, where the yard seemed to me to be about five hundred feet above the deck where we stood.

"Yes, sir, I see it."

"Very well; now suppose you go up there and take a closer look at it. It's going to be a very familiar road for you this voyage, and you had better make yourself acquainted with the way at once;" and he smiled at his wit, which I failed to appreciate just then.

The ship was on the wind, with all sails set, and drawing well, and she was reasonably steady; but as I gazed aloft, the mast was sweeping about in a very

dazing manner, and the rigging up there seemed to me about the size of a fishing line. Remember, I had never been aloft in my life. I hesitated.

"Well, Bob, I am waiting for you, but I shan't wait very long, my son;" and he picked up a piece of rattling stuff, a cord about the thickness of one's finger, and ostentatiously swayed to and fro.

I saw that he meant business, and I started on the trip at once. I have been aloft since that beautiful afternoon, many times in howling gales of wind to close-reef topsails; but I have never since experienced the abject fear I endured that day before I reached the *Bombay's* royal yard!

But I stuck to it, and I accomplished the task at last, and my first lesson in seamanship, the severest one of all, was past. Perhaps some of my readers may think that I magnify the undertaking; but, as I have said, I was a country lad, and in those days boys did not have gymnasiums, as they have now, to prepare them for such tests.

"Very well done, Bob, for a first attempt," said the mate, laughingly, as I reached the deck and busied myself in getting my trousers pulled down my legs after my frantic struggle aloft; "but I thought you would have squeezed all the tar out of the royal backstay, you gripped it so savagely. Oh, you'll make a sailor yet, lad, or I'll know the reason why. Now go forward and turn the grindstone for the carpenter."

From that day on I was kept constantly in practice in going aloft, and was soon given the main royal to loose and furl; so that in my watch on deck no other person was ever sent aloft for that purpose, and what had been but a few weeks before such a terrible task, became mere play to me.

83. A Ship on Fire

By Robert B. Dixon (1873)

While Tom was telling me his story, he had been "planking" the deck from rail to rail, continually on the lookout, occasionally stopping and peering ahead, first from one bow, then from the other, while I, leaning on the capstan-head, intently listened to what he said. Just as he had finished speaking, he stood still, and, steadily gazing off to leeward, said to me, —

"Come here, Bob. Your eyes are younger than mine: look off there," pointing with his hand, "and see if you can make out any thing that looks like a light in the distance."

I strained my eyes, trying hard to see it, but could not.

"That's a queer-looking light for a ship's side-light, and it doesn't look like a steamer's mast-head light either," said the mate.

The mate rubbed up the lenses of the spyglass with the corner of his coat; and, bracing himself, brought the instrument to his eye on a level with the horizon, and, adjusting the focus, looked long and steadily at the light. Suddenly he exclaimed, "By all the mud on Nantucket flats! That's a ship on fire, man. It's a good thing you saw that light. Call all hands at once, and square in the yards so that we may stand down towards them."

The mate, going aft, reported to the captain, who hastily came on deck. Taking a quick look through the glass at the light, which was now plainly visible off our port beam, the captain at once ordered the

yards squared, and eased off the main-sheet with his own hands.

"Crowd on every stitch of canvas, set the royal and top-mast stay-sail, and be quick about it," cried out the captain.

"Ay, ay, sir!" came back the cry from the mate, who was on the main deck urging on the men. We all realized the peril our fellow-creatures on the burning ship must be in. All sail was set, and we began tearing through the water as fast as it was possible for the old brig to go. Every sail was trimmed, and drawing to its fullest extent. Two men were stationed at the wheel to keep the brig steady, that she might not fall off too much from her course.

We were all eagerly intent, watching the burning craft, as we approached nearer. She was now about five or six miles distant; and, at the rate we were going, we would be up with her in half an hour.

The mate, who was on the after-house with the captain, walking forward a few steps, sang out, —

"Lay aft, men, and get the boat ready to lower!"

The lashings of the boat, which was hung at the "davies," were hastily cast off, and the boat was ready to lower into the water at a moment's notice. Having now come within a mile of the burning vessel, we could easily make out that she was a large ship, apparently deeply loaded. The whole forward part of the vessel was in flames; and the fire could be seen leaping up through the fore-hatch, in which part of the vessel it had probably begun.

We were now about a quarter of a mile to the windward of the burning ship. Our light sails were quickly taken in, the wheel put down, the brig rounded-to, and the topsails filling aback brought

the vessel to a stand-still. The boat, containing the second mate and two men, was lowered away at once, the falls unhooked, and the men, shipping their oars, pulled away with a strong and steady stroke. There was nothing for us to do but to wait anxiously for the return of our boat, and to find out how we might still further render assistance. Fortunately for the safety of the boat, the water was very smooth, the weather for the past few days having been remarkably fine.

It was a night I shall never forget. The sky was brightly illuminated by the glare of the burning ship, which also brilliantly lighted up the sea for miles around. Our boat was not yet half way to the burning ship. Our men could be seen bending at the oars with their utmost strength, and using every endeavor so reach the ship as soon as possible. At this moment a tremendous explosion occurred, which resounded again and again, like the rattle of thunder in the distance. The main and mizzen masts fell over the side with a loud crash, leaving the ship a dismasted hulk. The dense smoke from the explosion now lifting, we could see *débris* of all kinds floating in the water.

The hull, which was burning fiercely, was fast nearing the water's edge; and in a few moments more, the bow rising high out of the water, the ship went down stern first.

We were in a state of the most intense excitement, wondering as to the fate of the poor fellows that we had seen left on the deck of the ship just before the explosion took place. The smoke which clung to the water having lifted sufficiently, we could see our boat picking her way through the floating pieces of

wreck and cargo, some of which, still burning, lighted the way. The second mate could be seen standing in the stern-sheets of the boat, with the tiller-ropes in his hands, eagerly looking about, occasionally changing his course as something attracted his attention; now stopping the boat to pull in some apparently lifeless object, then steering away to continue the search, which he hoped would result in saving all the drowning men.

The ship's boat, which was overloaded, and sat deeply in the water, had been slowly pulling towards us during this time, and soon came under our lee quarter. We threw the men a rope, fastened a side-ladder over the stern and, with our assistance, they were soon on board. Their boat, for the time being, was made fast to the quarter, and allowed to drift astern.

One of the men, who proved to be the first officer, told the captain that their ship was the English ship *Oriole* of Shields, Capt. Talbot, and that they were bound from Philadelphia to Bremen with a cargo of petroleum.

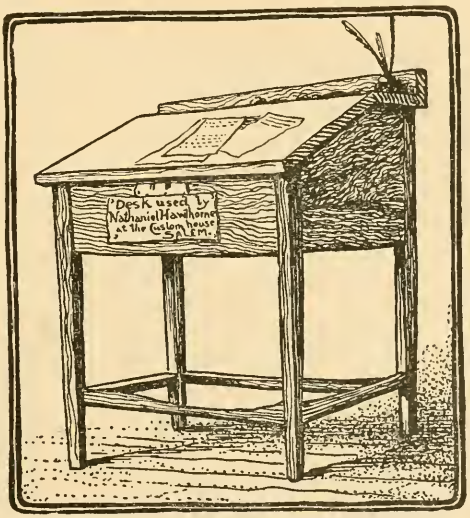
84. Sewing under Difficulties

By Robert B. Dixon (1873)

The next morning I was as hungry as a bear, and ate my tin-plate-full of "salt hoss," potatoes, and bread, washing it all down with a pot of muddy coffee. Never had any thing tasted so good to me: and, having eaten even to the last scrap, I had the audacity to ask the cook for another piece of beef;

but he would not give it to me, saying I had had my "stint."

The day was clear and warm; a stiff breeze was blowing from the north-west, and we were going through the water at a good pace; every thing holding favorable, we expected to sight the coast of Mexico in three days.



AN OLD DESK.

In the afternoon the cook let me have a little fresh water to wash out some of my clothes which had been wet through during the gale; he also gave me a small piece of soap; and, taking the bucket and my clothes, I went forward, and became a washerman for the first time. I rubbed and scrubbed away in the most energetic manner, using up my small allowance of soap on the first piece; and, besides, pulled off several buttons, tore the heel completely off one of my new stockings, and ripped a big slit in my shirt. Disgusted with my efforts, I hung up my dripping garments, not thinking to wring them out, and fastened them to the fore-stay, tying them on

securely, as I thought, with short bits of spun-yarn. When I went to take them in, I found two of my largest pieces missing: I had not tied them on fast enough, and they had blown away. Taking what remained, I went into my room, and attempted to repair the damage.

Sewing was something I had never tried before. I had several needles all threaded: and after pricking my finger several times, I got on very well with the slit in my shirt; but sewing on a button I found a more complicated matter. Going to the cook, I asked his assistance: he showed me how it was done, and kindly sewed on several for me. I now thought I could do it all right, so decided to make the attempt. The trousers which I wore possessed on one side a solitary button, to which for several days I had attached the two straps of my suspenders; and now that I was at it, and so confident of my ability, I determined to try my skill at sewing on the button myself. Taking the coarsest thread in the box that my mother had so well filled for me, and the largest needle I could find, I held the eye of it towards the light, and tried to thrust the thread through, but found it would not go so easily as I had imagined. I tried it again, first wetting the thread, and then twisting the end to a fine point between my fingers. This time, determined it should go through, I took deliberate aim; and, giving it a push, I grasped the head of the needle and the thread with my fingers, sure that I had succeeded: what was my dismay, on carefully opening them, to find the thread had passed to one side! After a few more attempts, and a deal of muttered and rather obscure conversation with myself, the needle was threaded. "Gloria Mundi!"

I shouted; and, pulling the thread through, I doubled it, cut it off about a yard long, and tied a large knot in the end of it.

Holding my trousers with my left hand, and keeping the button firmly in place by a finger and thumb, I proceeded with the difficult part of the undertaking. I stuck the needle through the hole in the button, gave it a quick thrust through the waistband, ran it into my side, and doubled over with a howl of pain; then, undismayed, I again grasped the needle, and gave it a long hard pull that brought the thread to the end. What was my grief, after all this effort, to see the button slip over the knot, and roll off onto the floor! I had pushed the needle through the wrong way. Trying again, and finally getting well started, I was just regaining my spirits, when the thread snarled up, caught, and broke. After pricking my fingers several times more, and sticking the head of the needle about half an inch under my thumb-nail, I got the button sewed on. Having some thread left in the needle, I wound it round and round between the button and the cloth, until the space was about half filled up, and then, running the needle several times through the cloth, cut off the thread. Having at last succeeded, I was happy.

The next day was Sunday, and a grand loafing-day: nothing was done except to wash down decks in the morning, pump the ship, occasionally take a slight pull at the braces, steer, and keep lookout. The sailors are naturally glad when Sunday comes around. Sunday dinner at sea is always a little better than common: "plum-duff" with sugar sauce is usually supplied forward; and, if a cook wants to keep on the right side of the crew, he must be able to

make a good "duff." In appearance it is very much like a loaf of brown-bread, with a raisin thrown in here and there. A large amount must be made, as the sailors expect it; and if, for any reason, the supply should be diminished or cut off, trouble would be likely to ensue.

85. Old Ironsides

By Oliver Wendell Holmes (1830)

The ship *Constitution* which took the *Guerrière* had grown weak and old-fashioned, and it was proposed in 1830 to break her up. Holmes's poetry had an effect, and the *Constitution* is still in existence.

Ay, tear her tattered ensign down!
Long has it waved on high,
And many an eye has danced to see
That banner in the sky;
Beneath it rung the battle shout,
And burst the cannon's roar;—
The meteor of the ocean air
Shall sweep the clouds no more!

Her deck, once red with heroes' blood,
Where knelt the vanquished foe,
When winds were hurrying o'er the flood,
And waves were white below,
No more shall feel the victor's tread,
Or know the conquered knee;—
The harpies of the shore shall pluck
The eagle of the sea!

O better that her shattered hulk
Should sink beneath the wave;
Her thunders shook the mighty deep,
And there should be her grave;

Nail to the mast her holy flag,
Set every threadbare sail,
And give her to the god of storms,
The lightning and the gale!

86. A Japanese Reception

By Commodore Matthew Galbraith Perry (1852)

Thursday (July 14), opened with a sun that was somewhat obscured at early dawn, but which soon came out brightly, and dispelled the fogs and clouds which overhung the land.

All on board the ships were alert from the earliest hour, making the necessary preparations. Steam was got up and the anchors were weighed, that the ships might be moved to a position where their guns would command the place of reception. All, of course, were eager to bear a part in the ceremonies of the day, but all could not possibly go, as a sufficient number must be left to do ship's duty. The officers, as had been ordered, were in full official dress, while the sailors and marines were in their naval and military uniforms of blue and white.

Before eight bells in the morning watch had struck, the *Susquehanna* and *Mississippi* moved slowly down the bay. Simultaneously with this movement of our ships, six Japanese boats were observed to sail in the same direction, but more within the land. On doubling the head-land which separated the former anchorage from the bay below, the preparations of the Japanese on the shore came suddenly into view. The

land bordering the head of the bay was gay with a long stretch of painted screens of cloth, upon which was emblazoned the arms of the Emperor. Nine tall standards stood in the centre of an immense number of banners of divers lively colors, which were arranged on either side, until the whole formed a crescent of variously tinted flags, which fluttered brightly in the rays of the morning sun. From the tall standards were suspended broad pennons of rich scarlet, which swept the ground with their flowing length. On the beach in front of this display were ranged regiments of soldiers, who stood in fixed order, evidently arrayed to give an appearance of martial force, that the Americans might be duly impressed with the military power of the Japanese.

Two boats approached as the steamers neared the opening of the bay, and when the anchors were dropped they came alongside the *Susquehanna*. Kayama Yezaiman, with his two interpreters, came on board, followed immediately by Nagazima Saboroske and an officer in attendance, who had come in the second boat. They were duly received at the gangway, and conducted to seats on the quarter deck. All were dressed in full official costume, somewhat different from their ordinary garments. Their gowns, though of the usual shape, were much more elaborately adorned. The material was of very rich silk brocade of gay colors, turned up with yellow velvet, and the whole dress was highly embroidered with gold lace in various figures, among which was conspicuously displayed on the back, sleeves, and breast the arms of the wearer. Saboroske, in spite of his elaborate toilette and his finery, all bedizened with gold thread, glossy silk, and gay colors, did not pro-

duce a very impressive effect; but by his comical appearance provoked mirth rather than admiration. He had, in fact, very much the appearance of an unusually brilliant knave of trumps. A signal was now hoisted from the *Susquehanna* as a summons for the boats from the other ships, and in the course of half an hour they had all pulled alongside with their various officers, sailors, and marines, detailed for the day's ceremonies. The ships' boats followed after in order, with the cutters containing the two bands of the steamers, who enlivened the occasion with their cheerful music.

The guides in the Japanese boats pointed to the landing place toward the centre of the curved shore, where a temporary wharf had been built out from the beach by means of bags of sand and straw. The advance boat soon touched the spot, and Captain Buchanan, who commanded the party, sprang ashore, being the first of the Americans who landed in the Kingdom of Japan. The rest of the boats now pulled in and disembarked their respective loads. The marines (one hundred) marched up the wharf, and formed into line on either side, facing the sea; then came the hundred sailors, who were also ranged in rank and file as they advanced, while the two bands brought up the rear. The American force was composed of very vigorous, able-bodied men, who contrasted strongly with the smaller and more effeminate-looking Japanese. Their line extended around the whole circuit of the beach, from the further extremity of the village to the abrupt acclivity of the hill which bounded the bay on the northern side; while an immense number of the soldiers thronged in, behind and under cover of the cloth

screens which stretched along the rear. The loose order of this Japanese army did not betoken any very great degree of discipline. The soldiers were tolerably well armed and equipped. Their uniform was very much like the ordinary Japanese dress. Their arms were swords, spears, and match-locks. Those in front were all infantry, archers and lancers; but large bodies of cavalry were seen behind, somewhat in the distance, as if held in reserve. The horses of these seemed of a fine breed, hardy, of good bottom, and brisk in action; and these troopers, with their rich caparisons, presented at least a showy cavalcade. Along the base of the rising ground which ascended behind the village, and entirely in the rear of the soldiers, was a large number of the inhabitants, among whom there was quite an assemblage of women, who gazed with intense curiosity, through the openings in the line of the military, upon the stranger visitors from another hemisphere.

On the arrival of the Commodore, his suite of officers formed a double line along the landing place, and as he passed up between, they fell into order behind him. The procession was then formed and took up its march toward the house of reception, the route to which was pointed out by Kayama Yezaiman and his interpreter, who preceded the party. The marines led the way, and the sailors following, the Commodore was duly escorted up the beach. The United States flag and the broad pennant were borne by two athletic seamen, who had been selected from the crews of the squadron on account of their stalwart proportions. Two boys, dressed for the ceremony, preceded the Commodore, bearing in an envelope of scarlet cloth the boxes which contained

his credentials and the President's letter. These documents, of folio size, were beautifully written on vellum, and not folded, but bound in blue silk velvet. Each seal, attached by cords of interwoven gold and silk with pendant gold tassels, was encased in a circular box six inches in diameter and three in depth, wrought of pure gold. Each of the documents, together with its seal, was placed in a box of rosewood about a foot long, with lock, hinges, and mountings, all of gold. On either side of the Commodore marched a tall, well-formed negro, who, armed to the teeth, acted as his personal guard. These blacks, selected for the occasion, were two of the best-looking fellows of their color that the squadron could furnish. All this parade was but for effect.

The procession was obliged to make a somewhat circular movement to reach the entrance of the house of reception. This gave a good opportunity for the display of the escort.

As the Commodore and his suite ascended to the reception room, the two dignitaries who were seated on the left arose and bowed, and the Commodore and suite were conducted to the arm chairs which had been provided for them on the right. They were both men of advanced years, the former apparently about fifty, and the latter some ten or fifteen years older. Prince Toda was the better looking man of the two, and the intellectual expression of his large forehead and amiable look of his regular features contrasted very favorably with the more wrinkled and contracted, and less intelligent face of his associate, the prince of Iwami. They were both very richly dressed, their garments being of heavy silk

brocade interwoven with elaborately wrought figures in gold and silver.

From the beginning, the two princes had assumed an air of statuesque formality which they preserved during the whole interview, as they never spoke a word, and rose from their seats only at the entrance and exit of the Commodore, when they made a grave and formal bow.

PART VII

THE ARMY

87. A Soldier in the Whiskey Rebellion

By John Shippen (1794)

Mount Pleasant Township,
Oct. 31, 1794.

My Dear Father: I am now seated in our tent, surrounded by two or three of my companions, while the remainder of the ten are finishing their supper. It is composed of chocolate, bread and butter, and the remnants of a chicken or two, which gratified our palates at noon.

They are supping on a little platform erected by way of sunshine table, at the door.

The talking and laughing of those around, and two different songs, one from each of the neighboring tents, combined at once in my ear, would perhaps entirely prevent me from writing or thinking at all, but that I have been so used to it for about two weeks past. I scarcely know that I am in the midst of it.

I might add before I proceed, that by way of table,

I have placed on my lap a little board. Yesterday morning it was the cover of a provision box for our mess, which had the ill fortune to be staved to pieces. This was part of the damage done to the property of our company, by the oversetting of our wagon yesterday.

I cannot help thanking you, sir, just in this place for your thoughtfulness and kindness in sending me your little green waxen taper. It serves me as light on this occasion. Were it not for its aid, I should be obliged to postpone writing till morning.

What with cooking, eating, feeding, currying and watering our horses, attending roll, standing guard, making our beds, and riding out in the country by turns to procure such necessaries as we want and to get our clothes washed, it consumes the whole day.

When we march it requires the greatest exertions to have every thing go smooth. If this were not the case, we should be unhappy. Work keeps our bodies, and consequently our minds, fully employed.

Things are most amazingly dear. We have however reduced prices somewhat by declaring we would not be imposed upon. We have plenty of beef and flour, sometimes we are lucky enough to draw bread. Hay and oats have been the scarcest. Hay has been less plenty. However, we are now getting in a more plentiful country.

Our marches are excessively slow and tiresome. We have sat on our horses, six, seven, and eight hours at a time, in the rain. One night, and that the worst since I left home, we slept on straw at the fire, covered by blanketing, without tents. The wagons had not been able to reach us. I believe not a single person experienced the slightest injury from it.

88. An Escape from the Enemy

By John Shippen (1794)

Pittsburgh, Nov. 15, 1794.

Dear and Honored Sir: I am sorry I have not been able to write you oftener than I have. The seldomness of an opportunity, the real want of time, sometimes the hurry and flurry of the camp, and at other times our tent, are some circumstances that have prevented my enjoying the agreeable exercise.

Nine prisoners were brought the other night by some of our scouring parties, from their beds in this town to the Pennsylvania Camp before they reached this encampment. They are now under guard.

I am told that a man by the name of Hamilton, who was very active in the late disturbances, was lately informed on. A person who knew him well undertook to describe his dress and identify him. A body of troops were set to guard the house; their orders were to shoot him if he came out and attempted flight.

In the meantime the cunning rogue was busy changing his dress for that of a hired man, very different from his own. He walked out of the house with apparent carelessness and unconcern. He spoke with the soldiers and officers. Indeed, he answered some questions that were put to him regarding Hamilton, with such adroitness that he escaped through them and fled. This story seems improbable but I am told that it is true.

Pittsburgh is a handsome situation. I think I never saw two more beautiful rivers than the Monongahela and Alleghany. Pittsburgh is amazingly crowded with

quarters of generals, colonels, aid-de-camps, and other officers. The people are afraid of being eaten up if the army should rest here, but I believe there is not the most distant danger.

89. The British March to Washington

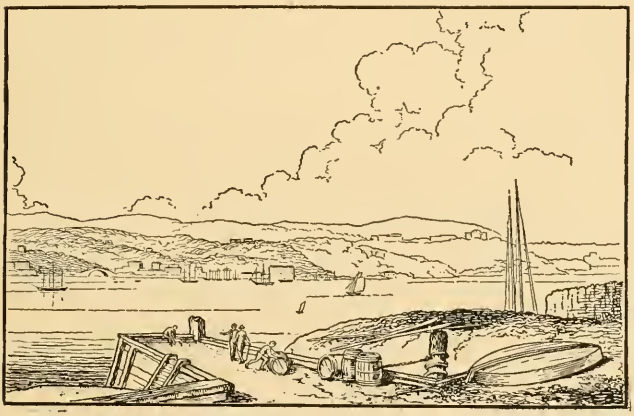
By George Robert Gleig (1812)

Five thousand British troops landed about fifty miles from Washington and marched up, took the city, and burned the public buildings.

We started, on the 24th, at an early hour, and our march was, for some time, both cool and agreeable. No sooner had we begun to emerge from the woods, and to enter the open country, than an overpowering change was perceived. The sun, from which we had been hitherto defended, now beat upon us in full force; and the dust rising in thick masses from under our feet, without a breath of air to disperse it, flew directly into our faces, occasioning the greatest inconvenience both to the eyes and respiration. Before many hours had elapsed, numbers of men began to fall behind, from absolute inability to keep up.

It was now that we experienced the great usefulness of our badly mounted troopers, or as they were called by the private soldiers, our cossacks. The country, from being extremely wooded, had become open on every side to a considerable extent, although thick groves, instead of hedges, frequently separated one field from another. This was exactly the ground on which an enemy's cavalry could act with advantage; because they might lie in ambush behind these groves, totally unperceived, and when an opportunity offered, might charge our column, before it had time

to prepare for their reception. There were one or two places, indeed, where such events were confidently anticipated; whole rows of paling having been pulled up from the side of the road, and open spaces left, through which several squadrons of horse might gallop; and the consequence was that every man held his breath in expectation, and prepared himself to form square in a moment. It was here, I say, that the mounted drivers became peculiarly useful. They



THE CITY OF WASHINGTON IN 1800.

were divided into small parties of six or eight, and sent out in different directions to reconnoitre, two of them generally taking post at every suspicious corner, that one might give notice to the column, while the other watched the motions of the enemy.

We had now proceeded about nine miles, during the last four of which the sun's rays had beat continually upon us, and we had inhaled almost as great a quantity of dust as of air. Numbers of men had

already fallen to the rear, and many more could with difficulty keep up; consequently, if we pushed on much further without resting, the chances were that at least one-half of the army would be left behind. To prevent this from happening, and to give time for the stragglers to overtake the column, an halt was determined upon, and the troops were led forward to a spot of ground well wooded, and watered by a stream which crossed the road, and they were ordered to refresh themselves.

The hour of noon was approaching when a heavy cloud of dust, apparently not more than two or three miles distant, attracted our attention. On turning a sudden angle in the road, and passing a small plantation, which obstructed the vision towards the left, the British and American armies became visible to one another. The position occupied by the latter was one of great strength, and commanding attitude. They were drawn up in three lines upon the brow of a hill, having their front and left flank covered by a branch of the Potomac, and their right resting upon a thick wood and a deep ravine. This river flowed between the heights occupied by the American forces and the little town of Bladensburgh. Across it was thrown a narrow bridge, extending from the chief street in that town to the continuation of the road, which passed through the very centre of their position.

This was at Bladensburg, near Washington.

In the mean time, our column continued to advance in the same order which it had hitherto preserved. The road conducted us for about two miles in a direction parallel with the river, and also with the enemy's line. In a short time we arrived in the streets of Bladensburgh, and within range of the American artillery. Immediately on our reaching this point,

several of their guns opened upon us, and kept up a quick and well-directed cannonade, from which, as we were again commanded to halt, the men were directed to shelter themselves as much as possible behind the houses.

Without allowing time to the column to close its ranks or to be formed by some of the many stragglers, who were now hurrying, as fast as weariness would permit, to regain their places, the order to halt was countermanded, and the word given to attack; and we immediately pushed on at double quick time towards the head of the bridge. While we were moving along the street, a continued fire was kept up, with some execution, from those guns which stood to the left of the road; but it was not till the bridge was covered with our people that the two-gun battery upon the road itself began to play. Then, indeed, it also opened, and with tremendous effect; for at the first discharge almost an entire company was swept down. The riflemen, likewise, now galled us from the wooded bank with a running fire of musketry; and it was not without trampling on many of their dead and dying comrades that the light brigade established itself on the opposite side of the stream.

When once there, however, every thing else appeared easy. Wheeling off to the right and left of the road, they dashed into the thicket, and quickly cleared it of American skirmishers; who, falling back with precipitation upon the first line, threw it into disorder before it had fired a shot. The consequence was, that our troops had scarcely shown themselves when the whole of that line gave way, and fled in the greatest confusion, leaving the two guns upon the road in possession of the victors.

The light brigade lightened themselves by throwing away their knapsacks and haversacks; and extending their rank so as to show an equal front with the enemy, pushed on to the attack of the second line. The Americans, however, saw our weakness, and stood firm; they had the whole of their artillery, with the exception of those captured on the road, and the greater part of their infantry in this line, and first checked the ardour of the assailants by a heavy fire, then, in their turn, advanced to recover the ground which was lost. The extended order of the British troops would not permit them to offer an effectual resistance against this charge, and they were accordingly borne back to the very thicket upon the river's brink. Here they maintained themselves with determined obstinacy, repelling all attempts to drive them through it; frequently they followed to within a short distance of the cannon's mouth, such parts of the enemy's line as gave way.

In this state the action continued till the second brigade had likewise crossed and formed upon the right bank of the river; when the 44th Regiment, moving to the right and driving in the skirmishers, debouched upon the left flank of the Americans and completely turned it. In that quarter, therefore, the battle was won. The rout was now general throughout the whole line. The reserve, which ought to have supported the main body, fled as soon as those in its front began to give way; and the cavalry, instead of charging the British troops, turned their horses' heads and galloped off, leaving them in undisputed possession of the field, and of ten out of the twenty pieces of artillery.

This battle, by which the fate of the American capitol

was decided, began about one o'clock in the afternoon and lasted until four. The loss on the part of the English was severe, since, out of two-thirds of the army, which were engaged, upwards of five hundred men were killed and wounded. On the side of the Americans the slaughter was not so great. Being in possession of a strong position they were of course less exposed in defending, than the others in storming it; and had they conducted themselves with coolness and resolution it is not conceivable how the day could have been won.

Our troops were worn down from fatigue, and ignorant of the country, so that the pursuit could not be continued to any distance. Neither was it attended with much slaughter. Diving into the recesses of the forests, and covering themselves with riflemen, the enemy were quickly beyond our reach; and as they had no cavalry to scour even the high road, ten of the lightest of their guns were carried off in flight. The defeat, however, was absolute, and the army, which had been collected for the defence of Washington, was scattered beyond the possibility of, at least, an immediate reunion; and as the distance from Bladensburgh to that city does not exceed four miles, there appeared to be no further obstacle in the way to prevent its immediate capture.



AN OFFICER OF THE WAR OF 1812.

90. From the Mistress of the White House

By Dolly Madison (1814)

Tuesday, August 23, 1814.

Dear Sister: My husband left me yesterday morning to join General Winter. He inquired anxiously whether I had courage or firmness to remain in the President's house until his return on the morrow, or succeeding day, and on my assurance that I had no fear but for him, and the success of our army, he left, beseeching me to take care of myself, and of the Cabinet papers, public and private. I have since received two despatches from him written with a pencil. The last is alarming, because he desires that I should be ready at a moment's notice to enter my carriage and leave the city; that the enemy seemed stronger than had at first been reported, and it might happen that they would reach the city with the intention of destroying it.

I am accordingly ready; I have pressed as many Cabinet papers into trunks as to fill one carriage; our private property must be sacrificed, as it is impossible to procure wagons for its transportation. I am determined not to go myself until I see Mr. Madison safe, so that he can accompany me, as I hear of much hostility toward him. Disaffection stalks around us. My friends and acquaintances are all gone, even the Colonel with his hundred who were stationed as a guard in this enclosure. French John (a faithful servant), with his usual activity and resolution, offers to spike the cannon at the gate, and lay a train of powder, which would blow up the British, should they enter the house. To the last proposition I positively

object, without being able to make him understand why all advantages in war may not be taken.

Wednesday morning, twelve o'clock — Since sunrise, I have been turning my spy-glass in every direction, and watching with unwearied anxiety, hoping to discover the approach of my dear husband and his friends; but alas! I can descry only groups of military, as if there was a lack of arms, or of spirit to fight for their own fireside.

Three o'clock — Will you believe it, my sister? we have had a battle or skirmish near Bladensburgh, and here I am still within sound of the cannon! Mr. Madison comes not. May God protect us! Two messengers, covered with dust, come to bid me fly; but here I mean to wait for him.

At this late hour a wagon has been procured, and I have had it filled with plate, and the most valuable portable articles, belonging to the house. Whether it will reach its destination, the "Bank of Maryland," or fall into the hands of British soldiery, events must determine. Our kind friend Mr. Carroll, has come to hasten my departure, and in a very bad humour with me, because I insist on waiting till the large picture of General Washington is secured, and it requires to be unscrewed from the wall. This process was found too tedious for these perilous moments; I have ordered the frame to be broken, and the canvas taken out. It is done and the precious portrait placed in the hands of two gentlemen of New York for safe keeping. And now, dear sister, I must leave this house, or the retreating army will make me a prisoner in it by filling up the road I am directed to take. When I shall again write to you, or where I shall be to-morrow, I cannot tell!

DOLLY.

91. The Pillar of Glory

By Edwin C. Holland (1813)

Hail to the heroes whose triumphs have brighten'd
The darkness which shrouded America's name;
Long shall their valor in battle that lighten'd,
Live in the brilliant escutcheons of fame:
Dark where the torrents flow,
And the rude tempests blow,
The storm clad spirit of Albion raves;
Long shall she mourn the day,
When, in the vengeful fray,
Liberty walk'd like a god on the waves.

The ocean, ye chiefs, (the region of glory,
Where fortune has destined Columbia to reign,)
Gleams with the halo and lustre of story,
That curl round the wave as the scene of her fame:
There, on its raging tide,
Shall her proud navy ride,
The bulwark of freedom, protected by heaven;
There shall her haughty foe,
Bow to her prowess low,
There shall renown to her heroes be given.

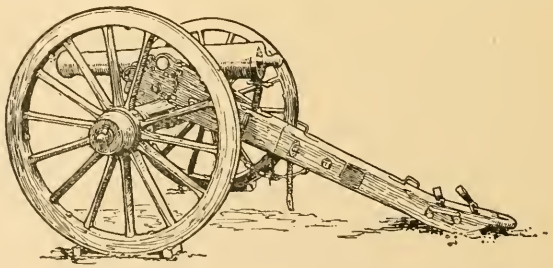
The Pillar of Glory, the sea that enlightens,
Shall last till eternity rocks on its base,
The splendor of fame its waters that brightens,
Shall light the footsteps of time in his race:
Wide o'er the stormy deep,
Where the rude surges sweep,
Its lustre shall circle the brows of the brave;
Honor shall give it light,
Triumph shall keep it bright,
Long as in battle we meet on the wave.

Already the storm of contention has hurl'd
From the grasp of Old England the trident of war,
The beams of our stars have illumined the world,
Unfurl'd our standard beats proud in the air:
Wild glares the eagle's eye,
Swift as he cuts the sky,
Marking the wake where our heroes advance;
Compass'd with rays of light,
Hovers he o'er the fight;
Albion is heartless — and stoops to his glance.

92. The First Attempt on New Orleans

By a British Officer (1814)

Before daylight, on the morning of the 13th, the boats, armed with carronades, entered the lake, and, after a pull of thirty-six hours, against the wind and



A big gun of 1812.

strong currents, the boats came, on the morning of the 14th, within sight of five American gun-vessels, which were moored off Saint Joseph's Island.

The boats were got into more dense order, and threw out their grapplings to get some refreshment, within a short pull of the enemy's line.

All being ready, the signal was given to advance, and when the boats were in good range the Americans pounded away. The boats' crews cried "Give way!" and cheered loudly; hence it became a boat-race. The Americans were moored in line, at least four hundred yards apart one from the other, while the attacking boats were a good deal divided, and each boat pulling away wildly came to close quarters. The clouds of smoke rolled upwards, and the splashing of round and grape shot in the water, and the loud exhortations of "Give way!" presented an animated scene at mid-day. The British at last mastered the Americans, and captured all the five vessels in succession, making their different crews prisoners, but not before some of the guns of the captured vessels had been turned upon those that still resisted, to enable the boarders to complete their victory.

By the 21st all the land forces were concentrated upon the Isle au Poix, situated about equidistant from the anchorage of the fleet and the destined place of landing.

Captain Travers's company of riflemen were pulled ahead. Seeing a fire on the right-hand side of the creek, a short way within its mouth, these riflemen quietly stepped ashore, and with a simultaneous rush they contrived to capture the whole of this lookout American picket without a single gun of alarm having been discharged by either party. The straggling boats then dashed up the creek, which is enclosed on either side by a vast sea of reeds. Soon after daylight, a few of the troops made good their landing on

the left-hand side of the creek, within seven miles of New Orleans during the previous night, and the other boats came up one by one. Early the next day one thousand six hundred British troops were landed within seven miles of New Orleans. After marching through a small wood they came upon more solid ground near the head of the Bayau, and reached a house and plantation near the bank of the Mississippi. Here the same company of riflemen, which had taken the American picket the night before, now again took a major and twenty armed American militia-men, in coloured clothes, prisoners, within six miles of New Orleans, without a shot being discharged on either side, or an individual left at liberty to carry any intelligence of so wonderful an arrival of armed visitors so near the city. Unfortunately the captive major effected his escape, and conveyed the news of the landing of the British to Orleans.

Not a single obstacle worthy of naming stopped the march of the soldiers.

There was still five hours' light; but the whole day was lost, and the troops halted at the very time they ought to have gone on. Two American vessels were seen anchored up the river, but no notice was taken of them, or rather no preparations were made to receive them should they slip their cables, although the spot which the British were now holding was a contracted space of ground within a few hundred yards of the Mississippi.

Night was now coming on apace; the British troops were already landed, and the soldiers were lounging about.

Fires now blazed in the bivouac and all around Monsieur Villerey's house, and many lights showed

the dark outlines of men passing to and fro, and busily employed cooking in the kettles belonging to the slaves of the plantation. Some of the soldiers were asleep, whilst others were partaking of a warm meal after a long fast.

In this happy state of security his Britannic Majesty's troops were indulging, their arms piled, and each soldier looking after his little immediate necessities. Their van-guards were in front at the usual military distance when, at eight o'clock, a heavy splash in the river was distinctly heard by some of the troops. This soon proved to be the American sloop of fourteen guns which had been seen up the river; and now, after dark came down, let go her anchor, and swung round her head to the current, with her broadside facing the bivouac, within a few hundred yards. The fires, like so many land-marks or beacons, enabled the Americans to point their guns. All was prepared on board the sloop, and *vice versâ* all was unprepared on shore, when a sonorous voice was heard to exclaim, in broad English, (as if rising out of the waters of the Mississippi), "Now, give it 'em!" As the flashes from the cannon reflected for a moment the outlines of the ominous sloop on the water, the round and grape-shot plunged like so many thunder-bolts amongst the astounded troops, and the balls bore down whole piles of arms, knocking kettles off the fires, scattering blazing beams of wood about, maiming some soldiers, and sending others whence no traveller returns.

The morning of the 24th broke sluggishly, and the smoking ports of the sloop (it was a sore thorn in the side of the British head-quarters) still projected its iron thunder amongst the besieged.

By the morning of the 25th all the scattered remains of the British force were landed piece-meal, hour after hour, by the prodigious exertions of the sailors. All eyes were still cast on the American schooner, whose sides still smoked by day, and at night vomited iron harbingers from its ports into the bivouac of the British, so that, in point of fact, the city of New Orleans and General Jackson now became only a secondary consideration, and the discussion was how to get rid of this watery dragon; for the destruction of which heavy guns were sent for to the fleet, if possible, to blow her out of the water.

General Jackson profited by this floating deception, placed there to allure the British general, and took advantage of his own manœuvre, which fortunately for him had the desired effect; and he prolonged the broad ditch by making a cut across the high road to the bank of the Mississippi, about one hundred yards behind the crescent battery on the high road.

This work was executed as a sort of forlorn hope to save New Orleans even for a day. Behind this cut and the ditch, the American general promptly constructed a barricade nearly three quarters of a mile in length, extending from the Mississippi on his right to the impassable wood on his left, all across a flat and naked plain, and within a few hundred yards of the British out-guards.

The manner of putting this barricade together was most curious: in the first instance detached barrels and sugar casks were brought up and left here and there standing isolated, the apertures between them being filled up with mud and all sorts of odds and ends placed along the edge of the ditch so as to form a temporary screen to protect the defenders

against musketry ; the barricade being hardly breast high, looked like some contemptible expedient, but the ditch ten feet wide and two or three feet deep protected this barricade in front, and made a pretty tolerable field position.

Four heavy pieces of cannon were now in the crescent battery, which made it somewhat more respectable. The rude barricade as a war stratagem was botched together in a sorry straggling way, but was added to and improved in strength from hour to hour, and the interstices betwixt the casks and other crevices of these rough and ready materials were caulked up with mud and other materials. All this labour was executed, without any annoyance from the British advanced posts, within one mile and a quarter of their head-quarters, by a defeated mass of peasantry, who only stood their ground because no one molested them.

On the 27th, the besieged blew up the American sloop from the battery with hot balls, and her timbers floated down the turbid waters of the Mississippi, but not before her crew had taken to their boats and got safely ashore.

On the morning of the 28th, at day-break, General Gibbs, with his brigade, advanced towards the left of the American barricades, and General Keane in like manner along the high road parallel to the river, unhoused an American picket from a building a few hundred yards in front of their crescent battery, which the enemy set on fire to make more smoke.

General Keane's brigade was steadily advancing, the rifle-corps leading ; but when within good cannon range, the crescent battery, with full charge of powder and ball, resounded a loud defiance, and some

cannon balls, striking the centre of the middle regiment of the British, knocked down the soldiers, and tossed them into the air like old bags. This column, to the utter astonishment of officers and soldiers, was ordered to halt just as their blood was up ready for the usual rush. And the light field-pieces began an interchange with the once significant crescent battery. The American ship of sixteen guns now threw its broadside obliquely in conjunction with the guns of the battery in front, that nearly destroyed all the artillery-men working the two British guns, and soon stopped their remonstrances; a few sailors finally dragged the guns off the field of contention, the gunners being nearly all killed or wounded. At first the centre of the column on the high road was thrown into some confusion, but was soon restored to order.

A battery was erected by the British seven hundred yards from the crescent battery of the Americans, and on the 1st of January, 1815, his Britannic Majesty's troops were again ordered to advance. A dense white fog, however, for a time obscured all objects, and was one of the luckiest circumstances that could have happened for the advantage of the attacking body. When it cleared off the heavy guns of the British opened with such effect that most of the Americans deserted the crescent battery, and a great deal of confusion happened within their main lines; for this being the first time they had felt the effects of round shot of any magnitude, and many of them went off towards New Orleans, while the bravest crouched behind their epaulments ready to stand up to repel the expected assault. For more than ten minutes they did not fire a gun, and the British cannoniers had the fight all to themselves. A whole brigade of infantry

close at hand burned to be ordered on to the assault, and with loud words demanded why they were not led on, when ladders and other materials had been brought up for the passage of that ditch. But to their utter astonishment no such order was given, and there is no doubt that the British troops, rushing on under cover of their guns with a few planks, would have obtained possession of the enemy's works with facility.

The Americans, seeing that no one came to molest them, first opened one gun, then a second, until all their artillery was subsequently manned. The weak defences of the British mud battery were pierced through and through, some of its guns dismounted, and a fresh batch of artillerymen nearly all killed and wounded; its fire was silenced, and at night the residue of its guns were either dragged away or buried. Thus ended the second siege of the crescent battery.

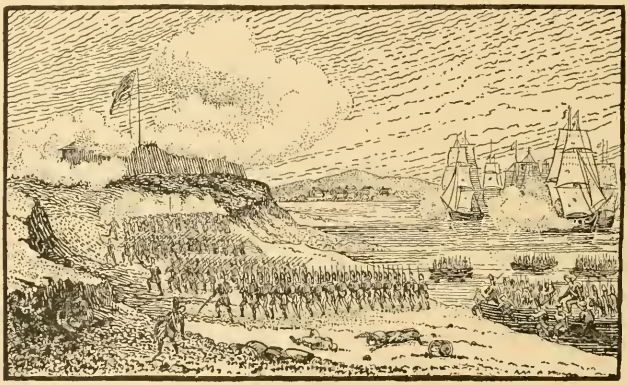
It was now considered by the British general that the American barricade was too strong to attack in front with his present force.

93. Battle of the Thames

By Henry M. Brackenridge (1813)

On the 5th of October, the pursuit was renewed; they captured provisions and ammunition to a considerable amount, and reached the place where the enemy had encamped the night before. Colonel Wood was now sent forward by the Commander-in-Chief, to reconnoitre the British and Indian forces;

and he very soon returned with information, that they had made a stand a few miles distant, and were ready for action. General Proctor had drawn up his regular forces across a narrow strip of land covered with beech-trees, flanked on one side by a swamp and on the other by the river; their left rested on the river supported by the larger portion of their artillery, and their right on the swamp. Beyond the swamp, and between it and another morass still further to the



UNDER FIRE.

right, were the Indians under Tecumseh. This position was skilfully chosen by Proctor, with regard to locality, and the character of his troops; but he committed an irreparable oversight in neglecting to fortify his front by a ditch, and in drawing up his troops "in open order, that is, with intervals of three or four feet between the files" — a mode of array which could not resist a charge of cavalry. His whole force consisted of about eight hundred regular soldiers and two thousand Indians.

The American troops, amounting to something more than three thousand men, were now disposed in order of battle. General Harrison had at first ordered the mounted men to form in two lines, opposite to the Indians; but he soon observed that the underwood here was too close for cavalry to act with any effect. He was aware of the egregious error committed by Proctor as above mentioned, and well knew the dexterity of backwoodsmen in riding, and in the use of the rifle, in forest ground, so he immediately determined that one battalion of the mounted regiment should charge on the British regulars. The other was left to confront the Indians. The requisite arrangements were made, and the army had moved forward but a short distance, when the enemy fired. This was the signal for our cavalry to charge; and, although the men and horses in the front of the column at first recoiled, they soon recovered themselves, and the whole body dashed through the enemy with irresistible force. Instantly forming in the rear of the British, they poured on them a destructive fire, and were about to make a second charge, when the British officers, finding it impossible, from the nature of the ground and the panic which prevailed, to form their broken ranks, immediately surrendered.

On the left, the battle was begun by Tecumseh with great fury. The galling fire of the Indians did not check the advance of the American columns; but the charge was not successful, from the miry character of the soil and the number and closeness of the thickets which covered it. In these circumstances, Colonel Johnson ordered his men to dismount, and leading them up a second time, succeeded after a desperate contest in breaking through the

line of the Indians and gaining their rear. Notwithstanding this, and that the colonel now directed his men to fight them in their own mode, the Indians were unwilling to yield the day; they quickly collected their principal strength on the right and attempted to penetrate the line of infantry. At first they made an impression on it; but they were soon repulsed by the aid of a regiment of Kentucky volunteers led on by the aged Shelby, who had been posted at the angle formed by the front line and Desha's division.

The combat now raged with increasing fury; the Indians, to the number of twelve or fifteen hundred, seeming determined to maintain their ground to the last. The terrible voice of Tecumseh could be distinctly heard, encouraging his warriors; and although beset on every side except that of the morass, they fought with more determined courage than they had ever before exhibited. An incident, however, now occurred which eventually decided the contest. The gallant Colonel Johnson having rushed towards the spot where the Indians, clustering around their undaunted chief, appeared resolved to perish by his side, his uniform, and the white horse which he rode, rendered him a conspicuous object. In a moment his holsters, dress and accoutrements were pierced with a hundred bullets, and he fell to the ground severely wounded. Tecumseh, meanwhile, was killed in the mêlée. After the rescue and removal of the wounded colonel, the command devolved on Major Thompson. The Indians maintained the fight for more than an hour; but when they no longer heard the voice of their great captain, they at last gave way on all sides. Near the spot where this struggle took place, thirty Indians and six whites were found dead.

Thus fell Tecumseh, one of the most celebrated warriors that ever raised the tomahawk against us; and with him faded the last hope of our Indian enemies. This untutored man was the determined foe of civilization, and had for years been laboring to unite all the Indian tribes in resisting the progress of our settlements to the westward. Had such a man opposed the European colonists on their first arrival, this continent might still have been a wilderness. Tecumseh fell respected by his enemies as a great and magnanimous chief. Although he seldom took prisoners in battle, he was merciful to those who had been taken by others; and, at the defeat of Dudley, actually put to death a chief whom he found engaged in the work of massacre. He had been in almost every engagement with the whites since Harmer's defeat in 1791, although at his death he scarcely exceeded forty years of age. Tecumseh had received the stamp of greatness from the hand of nature; and had his lot been cast in a different state of society, he would have shone as one of the most distinguished of men. He was endowed with a powerful mind, and with the soul of a hero. There was an uncommon dignity in his countenance and manners: by the former he could easily be discovered, even after death, among the rest of the slain, for he wore no insignia of distinction. When girded with a silk sash, and told by General Proctor that he was made a brigadier-general in the British service for his conduct at Brownstown and Magagua, he refused the title. Born without title to command, such was his native greatness, that every tribe yielded submission to him at once, and no one ever disputed his precedence. Subtle and fierce in war, he was pos-

sessed of uncommon eloquence. Invective was his chief merit, as we had frequent occasion to experience. He gave a remarkable instance of its power in the reproaches which he applied to General Proctor, in a speech delivered a few days before his death; a copy of which was found among the papers of the British officers. His form was uncommonly elegant. His stature was about six feet, and his limbs were perfectly proportioned.

In this engagement, the British loss was nineteen regulars killed, fifty wounded, and about six hundred taken prisoners. The Indians left one hundred and twenty on the field. The American loss, in killed and wounded, amounted to upwards of fifty. Several pieces of brass cannon, the trophies of our Revolution, and which had been surrendered by Hull at Detroit, were once more restored to our country. General Proctor had basely deserted his troops as soon as the charge was made; and though hotly pursued, was enabled, by means of swift horses and his knowledge of the country, to escape down the Thames. His carriage with his private papers, however, was taken.

94. Campaigning on the Niagara

By Captain Samuel White (1814)

In 1814 the governor of Pennsylvania ordered out a portion of

Before day-break on the morning of the fifth, it was ascertained that the Colonel to whom orders had been sent by General Porter to supply the troops with three days' provisions, had neglected that necessary precaution; the consequence was, that a boat

had to be despatched to Buffalo with an order for provisions, which, however, did not reach us until about two o'clock in the day, when we were supplied with a couple of biscuits each, being the first which a majority of us had eaten that day. At four o'clock we came in view of the encampment of our regular troops, and halted. We had not been many minutes at rest before a requisition was made for volunteers to turn out and drive off the hostile Indians who had been firing on our pickets. Fatigued as we were, having traveled that day about eighteen miles without rations, it is not surprising that not much alacrity was shown by the men to become of the party. Lieutenant Gilleland, Ensign Graff, the surgeon of the volunteers, and myself, laid aside our swords, and borrowing rifles, volunteered as privates; about three hundred of the volunteers of our own regiment also came forward, and these were strengthened by several hundred Indians, the whole under the command of General Porter, Colonel Bull, and Major Galloway. I had eaten nothing except one biscuit from the time I had my dinner the day before at Buffalo, and had even given away the balance of my store, expecting to get a good supper that evening; but I was doomed to be mistaken.

the state militia to repel the invasion of the British on the northern frontier. White was a captain of militia in Adams County, and arrived at Buffalo in time for the Niagara campaign, but was taken captive during the battle of Chippewa here described.

Orders were issued that every white man who went out under General Porter should leave his hat, and go uncovered. The Indians tied up their heads with pieces of white muslin, and it was really diverting to see them making their preparations for battle. After having tied up their heads, which process must have consumed at least fifty yards of fine muslin, they painted their faces, making red streaks above their eyes and foreheads; they then went to old logs and

burnt stumps, and spitting upon their hands, rubbed them upon the burnt part, until they were perfectly black, when they drew their fingers down their cheeks, leaving large black streaks; after this preparation they were ready for action or march. We proceeded in single file through a lane to our left, and in the course of half an hour came in contact with the enemy, who were posted in the woods on our right, and completely concealed from our observation. Immediately upon our entering a long narrow path, they opened upon us with a pretty brisk fire; we faced to the right, and pressing forward, put them to rout. They continued their flight and we pursued them, keeping up a smart fire, which, from the manner of the position, did considerable damage, until they drew us into rather a perilous situation.

The whole British army had crossed the bridge at Chippewa, and drawn up their forces under cover of a piece of woods, near the Niagara River, and running parallel with the Chippewa Creek, directly across the creek, where the British batteries commanded the same position. Driving the Indians rapidly through the woods, we at length came in full contact with the British regular line, which, in conjunction with the batteries, opened a most tremendous fire. From the clouds of dust and heavy firing, General Brown concluded that the entire force of the British was in motion, and gave orders to General Scott to advance with his brigade and Towson's artillery, and meet the enemy on the plain in front of the American camp. In a few minutes Scott was in close action with a far superior force of regulars. Major Jessup, commanding the battalion on the

left flank, finding himself pressed both in front and rear, and his men falling fast, ordered his battalion to support arms and advance, which bold order, in the midst of the enemy's hottest fire, was obeyed with a promptness which did them honour. Having advanced within twenty paces of the enemy's line, they were ordered to level and fire, causing such havoc in the enemy's line as forced them to retreat. About this time also one of our hot shot fell into the enemy's magazine and blew it up. This occurrence silenced their artillery; the whole British force fell back, and being closely pressed by the American troops, retreated in confusion to their entrenchment, about a quarter of a mile distant. General Brown immediately ordered the ordnance to be brought up with the intention of forcing the works, but upon more mature reflection, and by the advice of his officers, he was induced to order the forces back to camp.

In this engagement, which resulted so disastrously to the British, a considerable portion of the army, though burning for the conflict, had not an opportunity of coming into action. The conquerors of the veterans of France, were, in fact, defeated by a detachment from the American army. The only troops engaged on the part of General Brown, were Scott's brigade, and the Pennsylvania volunteers, commanded by Porter. The conduct of these men was heroic in the extreme: wherever they directed their fire or pointed their bayonets, the boasted "conquerors of the peninsula" fell or fled; the volunteers, in particular, manifested all the coolness and bravery of regular troops. Such was the punishment they received in this engagement, that, although battle was

offered them again on their own terms, they shrunk from its acceptance.

The loss of the enemy was nearly six hundred killed, as was ascertained some time afterwards, although they were never willing to acknowledge it so great; they removed, however, off the field, nearly five hundred wounded men before their retreat, and the loss in the woods of the Canadian militia, by our scouting party, was upwards of eighty killed. It was not known how many Indians fell, but their loss must have been very great. When our scouting party returned, there were but twenty men missing, five of of that number were prisoners, four whites and one Indian.

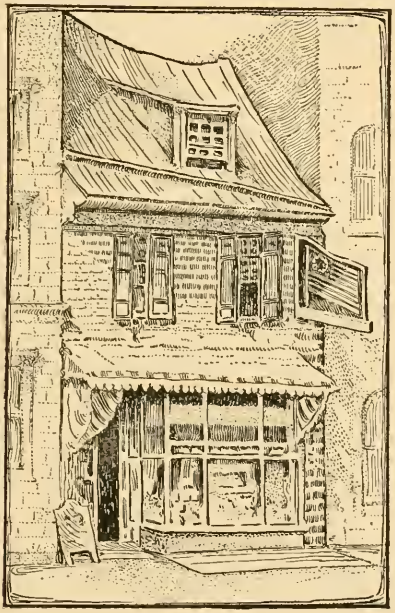
95. The American Flag

By Joseph Rodman Drake (1818)

When Freedom from her mountain height,
Unfurl'd her standard to the air,
She tore the azure robe of night,
And set the stars of glory there!
She mingled with its gorgeous dyes
The milky baldric of the skies,
And striped its pure, celestial white
With streakings of the morning light;
Then from his mansion in the sun,
She call'd her eagle bearer down,
And gave into his mighty hand
The symbol of her chosen land.

Majestic monarch of the cloud!
Who rear'st aloft thy regal form,

To hear the tempest trumping loud,
And see the lightning-lances driven;
When stride the warriors of the storm,
And rolls the thunder-drum of heaven!
Child of the sun! to thee 'tis given



WHERE THE FIRST AMERICAN FLAG WAS MADE.

To guard the banner of the free,
To hover in the sulphur smoke,
To ward away the battle stroke,
And bid its blendings shine afar,
Like rainbows on the cloud of war,
The harbingers of victory.

Flag of the brave! Thy folds shall fly,
The sign of hope and triumph high!
When speaks the signal trumpet tone,
And the long line comes gleaming on,
(Ere yet the life-blood, warm and wet,
Has dimm'd the glistening bayonet,)
Each soldier's eye shall brightly turn,
To where thy meteor glories burn,
And, as his springing steps advance,
Catch war and vengeance from the glance!
And when the cannon-mouthings loud,
Heave in wild wreaths the battle-shroud,
And gory sabres rise and fall,
Like shoots of flame on midnight pall, —
There shall thy victor glances glow,
And cowering foes shall sink beneath
Each gallant arm that strikes below
That lovely messenger of death!

Flag of the seas! on ocean's wave,
Thy stars shall glitter o'er the brave,
When death, careering on the gale,
Sleeps darkly round the bellied sail,
And frighted waves rush wildly back
Before the broadside's reeling rack, —
The dying wanderer of the sea
Shall look, at once, to heaven and thee,
And smile to see thy splendors fly,
In triumph o'er his closing eye.

Flag of the free heart's only home!
By angel hands to valor given, —
Thy stars have lit the welkin dome,
And all thy hues were born in heaven!

For ever float that standard sheet!
Where breathes the foe that stands before us
With Freedom's soil beneath our feet,
And Freedom's banner streaming o'er us!

96. A Hot Fight in front of the American Lines

By John Henry Cooke (1814)

We had run the gauntlet, from the left to the centre in front of the American lines, under a cross fire, in hopes of joining in the assault, and had a fine view of the sparkling of the musketry, and the liquid flashes from the cannon. Melancholy to relate, all at once many soldiers were met wildly rushing out of the dense clouds of smoke lighted up by a sparkling sheet of fire, which hovered over the ensanguined field. Regiments were shattered, broke, and dispersed, all order was at an end. The dismal spectacle was seen of the dark shadows of men, like skirmishers, breaking out of the clouds of smoke, which slowly and majestically rolled along the even surface of the field. So astonished was I at such a panic, that I said to a retiring soldier, "Have we or the Americans attacked?" for I had never seen troops in such a hurry without being followed. "No," replied the man, with the countenance of despair and out of breath, as he run along, "we attacked, Sir." For still the reverberation was so intense towards the great wood, that any one would have thought the great fighting was going on there instead of immediately in front.

Lieutenant Duncan Campbell, of our regiment, was seen to our left running about in circles, first staggering one way, then another, and at length fell helplessly upon his face on the sod. While being borne insensible to the rear, he still clutched the hilt of his sword with a convulsive grasp, the blade of which was broken off close at the hilt with grape-shot. He lived only a few days.

The first officer we met was Lieutenant-colonel Stovin, of the staff, who was unhorsed, without his hat, and bleeding down the left side of his face. He at first thought that the two hundred men were the whole regiment, and he said, "Forty-third, you men must save the day!" Lieutenant-colonel Smith, of the rifles and one of Packenham's staff, then rode up at full gallop from the right, and said to me, "Did you ever see such a scene? There is nothing left but the Seventh and Forty-third! Just draw up here for a few minutes to show front that the repulsed troops may re-form." The chances now were, as the greater portion of the actually attacking corps were stricken down, and the remainder dispersed, that the Americans would become the assailants. The ill-fated rocket was discharged before the British troops moved on; the consequence was, that every American gun was warned by such a silly signal to be laid on the parapets ready to be discharged with the fullest effects.

The misty field of battle was now inundated with wounded officers and soldiers who were going to the rear from the right, left, and centre; in fact, little more than one thousand soldiers were left unscathed out of the three thousand that attacked the American lines, and they fell like the very blades of grass beneath the scythe of the mower. Packenham was killed,

Gibbs was mortally wounded, and his brigade dispersed like the dust before the whirlwind, and Keane was wounded. The command of His Majesty's forces at this critical juncture now fell to Major-general Lambert, the only general left, who was in reserve with his fine brigade.

For five hours the enemy plied us with grape and round shot; some of the wounded lying in the mud or on the wet grass, managed to crawl away; but every now and then some unfortunate man was lifted off the ground by round shot, and lay killed or mangled. During the tedious hours we remained in front, it was necessary to lie on the ground, to cover our-



A FLINT LOCK OF 1812.

selves from the projectiles. An officer of our regiment was in reclining posture, when grape-shot passed through both his knees; at first he sank back faintly, but at length opening his eyes and looking at his wounds, he said, "Carry me away, I am chilled to death." As he was hoisted on the men's shoulders, more round and grape-shot passed his head; taking off his cap, he waved it; and after many narrow escapes got out of range, suffered amputation of both legs, but died of his wounds on board ship, after enduring all the pain of the surgical operation, and passing down the lake in an open boat.

A tree, about two feet in diameter and fifteen in height, with a few scattered branches at the top, was the only object to break the monotonous scene. This

tree was near the right of our regiment: the Americans, seeing some persons clustering around it, fired a thirty-two pound shot, which struck the tree exactly in the centre, and buried itself in the trunk with a loud concussion. Curiosity prompted some of us to take a hasty inspection of it, and I could clearly see the rusty ball within the tree. I thrust my arm in a little above the elbow-joint, and laid hold of it; it was truly amusing between the intervals of firing the cannon, to witness the risks continually run by the officers to take a peep at this shot. Owing to this circumstance, the vicinity of the tree became rather a hot birth; but the American gunners failed to hit it a second time, although some balls passed very near on each side, and for about an hour it was a source of excessive jocularity to us. In the middle of the day a flag of truce was sent by General Lambert to General Jackson, to be allowed to bury the dead, which was acceded to by the latter on certain conditions.

97. Canadian Camps and Battles

By Elias Darnall (1812)

The weather is excessively cold; the ice has stopped the navigation of the river, so that the plan of going to the Rapids by water is entirely frustrated; we had prepared about sixty pirogues for the voyage, which will be left here for our successors.

Pirogues originally were canoes hollowed from the

The General has ordered the commandants of regiments to cause each company to be provided with a sufficient number of sleds to convey their baggage to the Rapids. It is said these sleds are

to be pulled by the men, as we have not a horse in camp able to pull an empty sled. A little flour came to camp once more, to-day, quarter-rations of that article were issued, which was welcomed by rejoicing throughout the camp. Two days later Captain Hickman returned with joyful news — that we should in a short time be supplied with flour. The deficiency in this article had produced serious consequences in the army. We have here been exposed to numberless difficulties, as well as deprived of the common necessities of life; and what made these things operate more severely was, all hopes of obtaining any conquest was entirely abandoned. Obstacles had emerged in the path to victory, which must have appeared unsurmountable to every person endowed with common sense. The distance to Canada, the unpreparedness of the army, the scarcity of provisions, and the badness of the weather, show that Malden cannot be taken in the remaining part of our time. And would it not have been better if this army had been disbanded? Our sufferings at this place have been greater than if we had been in a severe battle. More than one hundred lives have been lost owing to our bad accommodations! The sufferings of about three hundred sick at a time, who are exposed to the cold ground and deprived of every nourishment, are sufficient proofs of our wretched condition. The camp had become a loathsome place. The hope of being one day relieved from these unnecessary sufferings affords some relief.

trunk of a tree. They were later developed into a sort of flat-bottomed ferry-boat, as mentioned in this selection.

We received this evening a supply of flour, and have been delivered from a state of starvation. It being Christmas eve, just after dark a number of guns were fired in quick succession; the whole army

was ordered to parade in order of battle; strict orders were given to suppress the firing. About an hour before day the firing commenced again; the army was again paraded and strict orders given, threatening to punish the offenders.

We are now about commencing one of the most serious marches ever performed by the Americans, destitute in a measure of clothes, shoes, and provisions, — the most essential articles necessary for the existence and preservation of the human species in this world, and more particularly in this climate. Three sleds are prepared for each company, each to be pulled by a pack-horse, which has been without food for two weeks, except brush, and will not be better fed while in our service. Probably the most of these horses never had harness on, but the presumption is they will be too tame; we have, however, prepared harness out of green hides.

After nearly three months' preparation for this expedition, we commenced our march in great splendor; our elegant equipage cast a brilliant lustre on the surrounding objects as it passed! Our clothes and blankets looked as if they had never been acquainted with water, but intimately with dirt, soot and smoke; in fact, we have become acquainted with one much despised in Kentucky, under whose government we are obliged to live, whose name is "Poverty." We marched six miles and encamped near Colonel's regiment, which marched yesterday; the sick were left at No. Three, with a company from each regiment as a guard.

We started early, in order to get there before Colonel Elliott; after travelling fifteen miles, mostly on ice, we received information of the enemy being

there waiting for us; we were then within three miles of Frenchtown; we proceeded with no other view than to conquer or die. When we advanced in sight of the town and were about a quarter of a mile from it, the British saluted us by firing a piece of cannon; they fired it three times, but no injury was sustained. During this time we formed the line of battle, and raising a shout, advanced on them briskly; they soon commenced the firing of their small arms; but this did not deter us from a charge. We advanced close and let loose on them. They gave way, and we soon had possession of a village without the loss of a man. Three were slightly wounded. Twelve of their prisoners were scalped and one prisoner taken before they got to the woods. In retreating they kept up some firing.

We pursued them half a mile to the woods, which were brushy and suited to their mode of fighting. As we advanced, they were fixing themselves behind logs and trees to the best advantage. Our troops rushed on them resolutely and gave them Indian play, took advantage of trees, and kept them retreating a mile and a half in the woods. During this time a heavy fire was kept up on both sides. At length, after a battle of three hours and five minutes, we were obliged to stop the pursuit on account of the approach of night, and retire to the village. We collected our wounded and carried them to the village, leaving our dead on the ground. In this action the Kentuckians displayed great bravery, after being much fatigued with marching on the ice.

The next morning a party was sent to the battle-ground to bring in the dead, which were found scalped and stripped. In going over the battle-

ground great signs were seen (by the blood and where they had been dragged through the snow) of a considerable loss on the part of the enemy. Two of the wounded died. The British left a considerable quantity of provisions and some store goods, which answered us a valuable purpose.

98. Tall Americans

By Winfield Scott (1812)

Two bearers of flags of truce had been despatched to the British commander, but there was no return and no cessation of hostilities. It was concluded that they had been killed or captured by the Indians. Captains Totten and Gibson each volunteered to make a third attempt, but as bearing a flag had become a forlorn service, Lieutenant-Colonel Scott assumed the duty to himself, and took with him his gallant comrades, Totten and Gibson. Being uncommonly tall and in a splendid uniform, it was thought he had the best chance of being respected by the savages, who were under but little control. The party had to pass down, along the margin of the river some hundreds of yards, to find an easy ascent. Several shots had been fired at them, before they turned up to the left, when two Indians, after firing, sprang from a covert and seized the party. A deadly combat impended; but a detachment of regulars, headed by an officer, rushed to the rescue, and conducted the flag to the British commander, General Sheaffe. His first and second attempts to stop the

Indian fire on the American under the precipice proved unsuccessful, and Lieutenant-Colonel Scott demanded to be escorted back to his countrymen, that he might share their fate. He was prevailed upon to wait another trial, which succeeding, a formal surrender was made on terms honorable to all parties, and the prisoners were put in march for the village of Newark (since Niagara), at the mouth of the river.

On reaching the village of Newark, the American officers were lodged in a small inn after being divested of their swords, which were temporarily stacked under the staircase in the entry. A strong guard was at hand, and sentries were posted. In a few minutes a servant said that there were persons at the front door who desired to see the tall Americans. Lieutenant-Colonel Scott, passing through several doors, found, on reaching the entry, that his visitors were the same two Indians met by him some hours before when bearing the flag of truce. Captain Jacobs, one of them, a man of uncommon stature and power, speaking but little English, was interpreted by his companion.

The professed object of the Indians was to see if they had not in the several combats of the day hit the prisoner before them — each alleging that he had deliberately fired at him three or four times from no great distance. Their design, however, was no doubt sinister. All the surviving Indians were exceedingly exasperated at the severe loss their tribes had just sustained. Jacobs, accordingly to begin the fray, seized the prisoner rudely by the arm and attempted to turn him round to examine his back. The savage was indignantly thrown against the wall, when both

assailants, placing their hands on their knives and hatchets, exclaimed: "We kill you now!" It was an awful moment for the assailed. There was no witness or help at hand. The sentinel near the door who had improperly admitted the Indians, was not in view, and perhaps indifferent as to consequences. God and his own stout heart must save the American from instant butchery.

With one mighty spring he seized the hilt of a sword with an iron scabbard (easily drawn), then springing back he faced the enemy and occupied the narrow space between the staircase and the opposite wall, but far enough advanced to allow a free use of his sword over the depressed balustrade. In this strong position he could not be attacked by two assailants at once, and he was sure to fell the foremost, though he might be assassinated by the second before he could recover his sword.

At this critical moment — the parties standing at bay, but in act to strike — Captain Coffin, nephew and aide-de-camp of General Sheaffe, entered to conduct some of the prisoners to the general's quarters, where they were invited to dine. The scene spoke for itself. The captain instantly seized Jacobs by the collar with one hand, holding a cocked pistol in the other. The gallant aide-de-camp had just time to call out "The guard!" when a sergeant and squad rushed in and marched off the savages as prisoners. It required a strong escort to conduct the dinner guests in safety to and from the general's quarters, for the village swarmed with exasperated Indians.

99. Adams and Liberty

By Robert Treat Paine (1829)

Ye sons of Columbia, who bravely have fought
For those rights, which unstained from your sires had descended,
May you long taste the blessings your valor has bought,
And your sons reap the soil which their fathers defended.
'Mid the reign of mild peace,
May your nation increase,
With the glory of Rome, and the wisdom of Greece;
And ne'er shall the sons of Columbia be slaves,
While the earth bears a plant, or the sea rolls its waves.

In a clime, whose rich vales feed the marts of the world,
Whose shores are unshaken by Europe's commotion,
The trident of commerce should never be hurl'd,
To incense the legitimate powers of the ocean.
But should pirates invade,
Though in thunder array'd,
Let your cannon declare the free charter of trade.
For ne'er shall the sons, &c.

The fame of our arms, of our laws the mild sway,
Had justly ennobled our nation in story,
Till the dark clouds of faction obscured our young day,
And enveloped the sun of American glory.

But let traitors be told,
Who their country have sold,
And barter'd their God for his image in gold,
That ne'er will the sons, &c.

'Tis the fire of the flint, each American warms,
Let Rome's haughty victors beware of collision,
Let them bring all the vassals of Europe in arms,
We're a world by ourselves, and disdain a division.
While with patriot pride,
To our laws we're allied,
No foe can subdue us, no faction divide,
For ne'er shall the sons, &c.

Our mountains are crown'd with imperial oak;
Whose roots, like our liberties, ages have nourish'd;
But long e'er our nation submits to the yoke,
Not a tree shall be left on the field where it flourished.
Should invasion impend,
Every grove would descend,
From the hill-tops, they shaded, our shores to defend.
For ne'er shall the sons, &c.

Let our patriots destroy Anarch's pestilent worm;
Lest our liberty's growth should be check'd by corrosion;
Then let clouds thicken round us; we heed not the storm;
Our realms fear no shock, but the earth's own explosion.

Foes assail us in vain,
Though their fleets bridge the main,
For our altars and laws with our lives we'll maintain.
For ne'er shall the sons, &c.

Should the tempest of war overshadow our land,
Its bolts could ne'er rend freedom's temple asunder;
For, unmoved, at its portal, would Washington stand,
And repulse, with his breast, the assaults of the thunder!
His sword from the sleep
Of its scabbard would leap,
And conduct, with its point, every flash to the deep!
For ne'er shall the sons, &c.

Let fame to the world sound America's voice;
No intrigues can her sons from their governments sever;
Her pride is her Adams; her laws are his choice,
And shall flourish, till liberty slumbers for ever.
Then unite heart and hand,
Like Leonidas' band,
And swear to the God of the ocean and land,
That ne'er shall the sons of Columbia be slaves,
While the earth bears a plant, or the sea rolls its waves.

PART VIII

AT SCHOOL

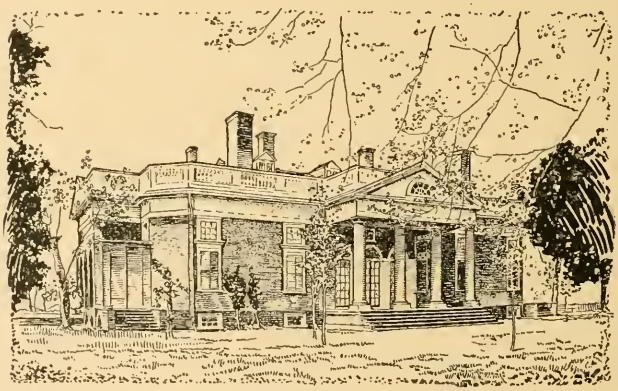
100. An Ambassador's Letters to his Daughters

By Thomas Jefferson and Martha Jefferson (1785–87)

From Thomas Jefferson, envoy of the United States to France, to his daughter Mary who was in America.

My dear Polly — I have not received a letter from you since I came to France. If you knew how much I love you and what pleasure the receipt of your letters gave me at Philadelphia, you would have written to me, or at least have told your aunt what to write, and her goodness would have induced her to take the trouble of writing it. I wish so much to see you, that I have desired your uncle and aunt to send you to me. I know, my dear Polly, how sorry you will be, and ought to be, to leave them and your cousins; but your sister and myself can not live without you, and after a while we will carry you back again to see your friends in Virginia. In the mean time you shall be taught here to play on the harpsichord, to draw, to dance, to read and talk French, and such other things as will make you more worthy of the love of your friends; but above all things, by our care and love of you, we will teach you to love us more than you will do if you stay so far from us.

I have had no opportunity since Colonel Le Maire went, to send you any thing; but when you come here you shall have as many dolls and playthings as you want for yourself, or to send to your cousins whenever you shall have opportunities. I hope you are a very good girl, that you love your uncle and aunt very much, and are very thankful to them for all their goodness to you; that you never suffer yourself to be angry with anybody, that you



MONTICELLO.

give your playthings to those who want them, that you do whatever anybody desires of you that is right, that you never tell stories, never beg for any thing, mind your books and your work when your aunt tells you, never play but when she permits you, nor go where she forbids you; remember, too, as a constant charge, not to go out without your bonnet, because it will make you very ugly, and then we shall not love you so much. If you always practice these lessons we shall continue to love you as we do now, and it is

impossible to love you any more. We shall hope to have you with us next summer, to find you a very good girl, and to assure you of the truth of our affection for you. Adieu, my dear child. Yours affectionately,

TH. JEFFERSON.

From Mary Jefferson to her father.

DEAR PAPA — I long to see you, and hope that you and sister Patsy are well; give my love to her and tell her that I long to see her, and hope that you and she will come very soon to see us. I hope that you will send me a doll. I am very sorry that you have sent for me. I don't want to go to France, I had rather stay with Aunt Eppes. Aunt Carr, Aunt Nancy and Cousin Polly Carr are here. Your most happy and dutiful daughter,

POLLY JEFFERSON.

From Martha Jefferson, then in a Convent School.

Being disappointed in my expectation of receiving a letter from my dear papa, I have resolved to break so painful a silence by giving you an example that I hope you will follow, particularly as you know how much pleasure your letters give me. I hope your wrist is better, and I am inclined to think that your voyage is rather for your pleasure than your health; however, I hope it will answer both purposes. I will now tell you how I go on with my masters. I have begun a beautiful tune, done a very pretty landscape — a little man playing on the violin — and begun another beautiful landscape. I go on slowly with my Livy, it being in such ancient Italian that I can not read without my master, and very little with him even. As for the dancing-master, I intend to leave him off as soon as my month is finished. Tell me if you are still determined that I shall dine at the

abbess's table. If you are, I shall at the end of my quarter. Adieu, my dear papa. I am afraid you will not be able to read my scrawl, but I have not the time of copying it over again; and therefore I must beg your indulgence, and assure you of the tender affection of yours,

M. Jefferson.

Pray write often, and long letters.

My dear Papa — Though the knowledge of your health gave me the greatest pleasure, yet I own I was not a little disappointed in not receiving a letter from you. However, I console myself with the thought of having one very soon, as you promised to write to me every week. Until now you have not kept your word the least in the world, but I hope you will make up for your silence by writing me a fine, long letter by the first opportunity. Titus Livius puts me out of my wits. I can not read a word by myself, and I read of it very seldom with my master; however, I hope I shall soon be able to take it up again. All my other masters go on much the same — perhaps better. Every body here is very well, particularly Madame L'Abbesse, who has visited almost a quarter of the new building — a thing that she has not done for two or three years before now. I have not heard anything of my harpsichord, and I am afraid it will not come before your arrival. I go on pretty well with Thucydides, and I hope I shall very soon finish it. I expect Mr. Short every instant for my letter, therefore I must leave you. Adieu, my dear papa; be assured you are never a moment absent from my thoughts, and believe me to be, your most affectionate child,

M. Jefferson.

101. The Children's Love Feast

By Colonel John May (1788)

Sunday, 17th. Rose this morning at 3 o'clock, and went fourteen miles to breakfast at Bethlehem. We were received by the brotherhood in the most hospitable manner, especially by Mr. Heckewelder, who was for several years a missionary amongst the Moravian Indians. He paid particular attention to us and invited us to go to meeting with him. I accordingly went with him. To give a just description of this beautiful and agreeable day is far beyond my ability. When I entered the hall where they were worshiping, it struck me with a pleasing amazement to behold at one view upward of sixty little beautiful girls, seated in regular order, — all clad in white muslin or cambric, each with red ribbon in a large bow round her neck, with snug close caps; and also as many of an older order, and other two classes older still, — all in white, and all chanting their Maker's praise to the music of an elegant organ. I was all ear, all attention. I could compare such worship to nothing else but the worship of the kingdom of heaven; — they appeared to me like the saints, just disburdened from earth, arrayed in their white robes praising the Author of Goodness.

The Moravians were people driven from Central Europe because of their religious opinions. About 1722 a band of Moravians came to America, many of them settling in the Colony of Pennsylvania. They devoted much attention to Christianizing the Indians.

I went to my lodgings at noon, in raptures. It was not long before we had a formal invitation to attend the love-feast in the afternoon, which was gladly accepted. I was punctual to the time, which was two o'clock. The observance of a feast of this sort is a privilege the young misses have every 17th of August. It happened this year on Sunday. The

little ones were more numerous this afternoon than in the forenoon, and excelled in beauty all that even a glowing imagination could suggest. After they had chanted their hymns for about an hour, the great doors were swung open, and three pairs of maiden ladies appeared, each pair bringing between them a basket filled with large cakes, which they handed round to each miss and elderly lady. Soon after, two of the brothers came in, and in like manner handed the cakes to the gentlemen, and then withdrawing. In a short time, all returned with salvers of excellent coffee, and handed it round. This ceremony over, they sung again; and then there was an anthem, which rolled off finely, and the assembly broke up. I was then introduced to the governess, a very polite and agreeable lady, who waited on us to all the different apartments. I was extremely pleased with the order and regularity of the place, and having seen about all that was to be seen, returned to my lodgings.

102. Address to the Children of the North Schools, Boston

By Jeremy Belknap (1780)

This piece shows the old use of abbreviation and the character &.

Dear Child^{n}, — Your present age is the most proper season to begin those improvements w^{h} are to last through your whole lives. The spring of y^{e} year is the time for sowing seed; and youth is the time for sowing y^{e} seeds of knowledge & virtue in the human mind. But you must remember that the growth of seed depends on the quality & disposition of the ground as much as on the skill & diligence of

the person who sows it; so the cultivation of your minds depends as much on y^r^selvs as on y^r^ instructors. They may teach, but you must learn. They may take great pains to instruct you, but unless you diligently take heed to their instructions, & fix what they tell you in y^r^ own minds, all their teaching will profit you nothing. You see then that much of your improvement depends on y^r^ own diligence, & it is best that you should early form a habit of attention & not suffer yourselves to be unconcerned & thoughtless. Though it is proper that you should be allowed time for diversion, yet you must not make a business of y^r^ diversion, but only use it as a refreshment to relieve you from the fatigue of study, that you may go to it again with new relish & spirit. And believe me, whoever does not enter upon his studies with spirit will never make any figure as a scholar.

Another thing which I would recommend to you is, to govern yourselves; that is, to take such care of your own conduct as that your schoolmaster may be relieved of the trouble of governing you. It is the duty of every person to govern himself; and we cannot begin too early in life to practise this necessary duty. You should therefore learn to restrain your passions, to curb your tongue, to avoid all occasions of quarrelling, & to preserve a decent, sober, & attentive behaviour at school. This will gain the love of your master & enable him the more easily to carry on the work w^ch^ is committed to him. If every scholar would learn to govern himself, there would be no need of correction or expulsion, the ferule & cowskin would be thrown by, & the whole business of the school would be confined to instruction & learning.

And let me add, this is now become a matter of necessity; for by the new regulations w^ch^ have been introduced into the schools, you see that the number of scholars is increased, & the duty of the masters is increased with it. Let it therefore be your care as much as possible to lighten their burden with respect to government, & you will reap the benefit of it in having their time wholly devoted to the care of your learning. But there is a farther advantage to be gained by it; for if you learn to govern yourselves while young, you will get such a good habit as will probably remain with you thro' life, & make you exemplary in all your conduct, so that you will live usefully in this world & be prepared for the enjoyment of God hereafter.

103. The Indian at College

By Philip Freneau (1795)

From Susquehanna's farthest springs,
Where savage tribes pursue their game,
(His blanket tied with yellow strings,)
A shepherd of the forest came.

Not long before, a wandering priest
Express'd his wish with visage sad —
"Ah, why (he cried) in Satan's waste,
Ah, why detain so fine a lad?

"In white man's land there stands a town,
Where learning may be purchased low —
Exchange his blanket for a gown,
And let the lad to college go."

From long debate the council rose,
And viewing Shalum's tricks with joy,
To Cambridge Hall, o'er wastes of snows, Harvard College.
They sent the copper-color'd boy.

One generous chief a bow supplied,
This gave a shaft, and that a skin;
The feathers, in vermilion dyed,
Himself did from a turkey win:

Thus dress'd so gay, he took his way
O'er barren hills, alone, alone!
His guide a star, he wander'd far,
His pillow every night a stone.

At last he came, with foot so lame,
Where learned men talk heathen Greek,
And Hebrew lore is gabbled o'er,
To please the muses, — twice a week.

Awhile he writ, awhile he read,
Awhile he conn'd their grammar rules —
(An Indian savage so well bred
Great credit promised to the schools.)

Some thought he would in law excel,
Some said in physic he would shine;
And one that knew him passing well,
Beheld in him a sound divine.

But those of more discerning eye,
Even then could other prospects show,
And saw him lay his Virgil by,
To wander with his dearer bow.

The tedious hours of study spent,
The heavy moulded lecture done,
He to the woods a hunting went,
Through lonely wastes he walk'd, he run.

No mystic wonders fired his mind;
He sought to gain no learn'd degree,
But only sense enough to find
The squirrel in the hollow tree.

The shady bank, the purling stream,
The woody wild his heart possess'd,
The dewy lawn, his morning dream
In fancy's gayest colors drest.

"And why," he cried, "did I forsake
My native wood for gloomy walls;
The silver stream, the limpid lake
For musty books, and college halls?

"A little could my wants supply—
Can wealth and honor give me more;
Or, will the sylvan god deny
The humble treat he gave before?

"Where nature's ancient forests grow,
And mingled laurel never fades,
My heart is fix'd and I must go
To die among my native shades."

He spoke, and to the western springs,
(His gown discharg'd, his money spent,
His blanket tied with yellow strings,)
The shepherd of the forest went.

104. The Table Manners of an Indian Boy

By Isaac Weld (1796)

But though the Indians, in general, appear so reserved in the presence of strangers, yet the firmness of their dispositions forbids them from ever appearing embarrassed; they would sit down to table in a palace, before the first crowned head on the face of the earth, with as much unconcern as they would sit down to a frugal meal in one of their own cabins. They deem it highly becoming in a warrior to accommodate his manners to those of the people with whom he may happen to be, and as they are wonderfully observant, you will seldom perceive any thing of awkwardness or vulgarity in their behaviour in the company of strangers. I have seen an Indian, who had lived in the woods from his infancy, enter a drawing-room in Philadelphia, full of ladies, with as much ease and as much gentility as if he had always lived in the city, and merely from having been told, preparatory to his entering, the form usually observed on such occasions. But the following anecdote will put this matter in a stronger point of view.

Our friend Nekig, the Little Otter, had been invited to dine with us at the house of a gentleman at Detroit, and he came accordingly, accompanied by his son, a little boy of about nine or ten years of age. After dinner a variety of fruits were served up, and amongst the rest some peaches, a dish of which was handed to the young Indian. He helped himself to one with becoming propriety; but immediately after-

wards he put the fruit to his mouth, and bit a piece out of it. The father eyed him with indignation, and spoke some words to him in a low voice, which I could not understand, but which, on being interpreted by one of the company, proved to be a warm reprimand for his having been so deficient in observation as not to peal his peach, as he saw the gentleman opposite to him had done. The little fellow was extremely ashamed of himself; but he quickly retrieved his error, by drawing a plate towards him, and pealing the fruit with the greatest neatness.

Some port wine, which he was afterwards helped to, not being by any means agreeable to his palate, the little fellow made a wry face, as a child might naturally do, after drinking it. This called forth another reprimand from the father, who told him, that he despaired of ever seeing him a great man or a good warrior if he appeared then to dislike what his host had kindly helped him to. The boy drank the rest of his wine with seeming pleasure.

No people are possessed of a greater share of natural politeness than the Indians: they will never interrupt you whilst you are speaking; nor, if you have told them any thing which they think to be false, will they bluntly contradict you; "We dare say, brother," they will answer, "that you yourself believe what you tell us to be true; but it appears to us so improbable that we cannot give our assent to it."

105. College Life in 1820

By Andrew Preston Peabody (1820)

The last sixty years can hardly have wrought greater changes, anywhere else than in Harvard College. In my time a student's room was remarkable chiefly for what it did not have. The feather-bed — mattresses not having come into general use — was regarded as a valuable chattel; but ten dollars would have been a fair auction-price for all the other contents of an average room, which were a pine bedstead, washstand, table, and desk, a cheap rocking-chair, and from two to four other chairs of the plainest fashion, the bed furnishing seats when more were needed. I doubt whether any fellow-student of mine owned a carpet. A second-hand-furniture dealer had a few defaced and threadbare carpets, which he leased at an extravagant price to certain southern members of the senior class; but even Southerners, though reputed to be fabulously rich, did not aspire to this luxury till the senior year. Coal was just coming into use, and had hardly found its way into college. The students' rooms — several of the recitation-rooms as well — were heated by open wood-fires. Almost every room had, too, among its transmittenda, a cannon-ball supposed to have been derived from the arsenal, which on very cold days was heated to a red heat, while at other seasons it was often utilized by being rolled down-stairs at such time as might most nearly bisect a proctor's night-sleep. Friction-matches — according to Faraday the most useful invention of our age — were not yet. Coals were carefully buried in ashes over night to start the morning fire;

while in summer, as I have elsewhere said, the evening lamp could be lighted only by the awkward, and often baffling, process of "striking fire" with flint, steel, and tinder-box.

The student's life was hard. Morning prayers were in summer at six; in winter, about half an hour before sunrise, in a bitterly cold chapel. Thence half of each class passed into the several recitation-rooms in the same building (University Hall), and three-quarters of an hour later the bell rang for a second set of recitations, including the remaining half of the students. Then came breakfast, which in the college commons consisted solely of coffee, hot rolls, and butter, except when the members of a mess had succeeded in pinning to the nether surface of the table, by a two-pronged fork, some slices of meat from the previous day's dinner. Between ten and twelve every student attended another recitation or a lecture. Dinner was at half-past twelve, — a meal not deficient in quantity, but by no means appetizing to those who had come from neat homes and well-ordered tables. There was another recitation in the afternoon, except on Saturday; then evening prayers at six, or in winter at early twilight; then the evening meal, plain as the breakfast, with tea instead of coffee, and cold bread, of the consistency of wool, for the hot rolls. After tea the dormitories rang with song and merriment till the study-bell, at eight in winter, at nine in summer, sounded the curfew for fun and frolic, proclaiming dead silence throughout the college premises, under penalty of a visit from the officer of the entry, and, in case of a serious offence, of private or public admonition.

This was the life for five days of the week. On

Sundays all the students were required to be in residence here, not excepting even those whose homes were in Boston; and all were required to attend worship twice each day at the college chapel. On Saturday alone was there permission to leave Cambridge, absence from town at any other time being a punishable offence. This weekly liberty was taken by almost every member of college, Boston being the universal resort; though seldom otherwise than on



HARVARD COLLEGE IN 1820.

foot, the only public conveyance then being a two-horse stage-coach, which ran twice a day. But the holiday could not be indefinitely prolonged. The students who were not present at evening prayers were obliged by law to register their names with the regent before nine o'clock, under a heavy penalty, which was seldom or never incurred; for the regent's book was kept by his freshman, who could generally be coaxed or bribed to "take no note of time."

The price of board in commons was a dollar and three-quarters, or, as was then the uniform expression, "ten and sixpence." The dining-rooms were on the first floor of University Hall. College officers and graduates had a table on an elevated platform at the head of each room, and the students occupied the main floor in messes of from eight to ten. The round windows opening into the halls, and the shelves set in them, still remaining in some of these rooms, were designed for the convenience of waiters in bringing dishes from the kitchen in the basement. That kitchen, cooking for about two hundred persons, was the largest culinary establishment of which the New-England mind then had knowledge or conception.

The professors, as well as the college officers, performed police duty as occasion seemed to demand; and in case of a general disturbance, which was not infrequent, the entire faculty were on the chase for offenders, — a chase seldom successful; while their unskilled manœuvres in this uncongenial service were wont to elicit, not so much silent admiration, as shouts of laughter and applause, which they strove in vain to trace to their source.

The recitations were mere hearings of lessons, without comment or collateral instruction. They were generally heard in quarter-sections of a class, the entire class containing from fifty to sixty members. The custom was to call on every student in the section at every recitation. Each teacher was supposed to have some system, according to which he arranged the order of his daily calls. Some, like Dr. Popkin, openly adopted the direct, some the inverse, alphabetical order, some the two alternately. As for the key to the order adopted by the others respec-

tively, there were, generally, conflicting theories, the maintenance of which brought into play a keenness of calculation and a skilful manipulation of data fully adequate to the solving of deeply involved algebraic equations. Of course, the endeavor — not always unsuccessful — was to determine what part of a lesson it was necessary for each individual student to prepare.

The range of study was much less extensive than now. Natural history did not then even profess to be a science, and received very little attention. Chemistry, under auspices which one does not like to recall, occupied, and utterly wasted, a small portion of the senior year. French and Spanish were voluntary studies, or rather recreations; for the recitation-room of the kind-hearted septuagenarian, who had these languages in charge, was frequented more for amusement than for anything that was taught or learned. Italian and German were studied in good earnest by a very few volunteers. There was a great deal of efficient work in the department of philosophy; and the writing of English could not have been cared for more faithfully, judiciously, and fruitfully, than by Professor Channing. But the chief labor and the crowning honor of successful scholarship were in mathematics and the classics. The mathematical course extended through the entire four years. In Greek and Latin, the aim, as has been already stated, was to reach the actual meaning of the author in hand, and to render his thought into clear and elegant English. This aim was attained, I think, to a high degree in Latin; and with the faithful and searching study of the Latin text, there grew up inevitably the sort of instinctive knowledge of Latin

grammar, which one conversant with the best English writers acquires of English grammar, without formal study. Such grammatical tact and skill were acquired by a respectable number of Latin scholars in every class; and the number was by no means small of those who then formed a life-long taste for Latin literature, and the capacity of reading it with all desirable ease and fluency. Greek was studied with much greater difficulty, and, when with similar, with much less satisfactory and valuable, results. The best scholars were often discouraged in the pursuit of knowledge under hindrances so grave, and had resort to contraband methods of preparation, which required little labor, and were of no permanent benefit.

106. Fashionable Education

By Reverend Timothy Dwight (1821)

The end, proposed by the parents, is to make their children objects of admiration. The children of the family are regularly introduced to company and the praise of the guests is administered to them as regularly, as the dinner or the tea, is served up. Commendation is rung through all its changes: and you may hear, both in concert and succession, "beautiful children;" "fine children;" "sweet children;" "lovely children;" "what a charming family!" "what a delightful family!" "you are a fine little fellow;" "you are a sweet little girl;" "My son, can't you speak one of your pieces before this good company?" "Caroline, where is your work?" "Susan, bring Miss Caroline's work, and show it to

that lady;" "Susan, bring with you the picture, which she finished last week;" with many other things of a similar nature. Were you to pass a twelve month in this country, and to believe all that you heard said by people, not destitute of respectability; whatever opinion you might form of the parents, you would suppose, that the children were a superiour race of beings, both in person and mind.



CLOCK FROM THE OLD BANK OF NEW YORK.

The means of effectuating this darling object are the communication of what are called accomplishments. The children are solicitously taught music, dancing, embroidery, ease, confidence, graceful manners. To these may be added what is called reading, and travelling.

The thoughts of a boy, thus educated, are spent upon the colour, quality, and fashion, of his clothes, and upon the several fashions to which his dress is to be successively conformed; upon his bow, his walk, his mode of dancing, his behaviour in company, and his nice observance of the established rules of good breeding. To mingle without awkwardness or confusion in that empty, unmeaning chat, those mere vibrations of the tongue, termed fashionable conversation, is the ultimate aim of his eloquence; and to comprehend, and to discuss, without impropriety the passing topics of the day, the chief object of his mental exertions. When he reads, he reads only to appear with advantage in such conversation. When he acts, he acts only to be admired by those

who look on. Novels, plays, and other trifles of a similar nature, are the customary subjects of his investigation. Voyages, travels, biography, and sometimes history, limit his severe researches. By such a mind thinking will be loathed, and study regarded with terror. In the pursuits, to which it is devoted, there is nothing to call forth, to try, or to increase, its strength. Its powers, instead of being raised to new degrees of energy, are never exercised to the extent, in which they already exist. His present capacity cannot be known for want of trial. What that capacity might become cannot be even conjectured. Destitute of that habit of labouring, which alone can render labour pleasing, or even supportable, he dreads exertion as a calamity. The sight of a classic author gives him a chill: a lesson in Locke, or Euclid, a mental ague.

On girls, this unfortunate system induces additional evils. Miss, the darling of her father and the pride of her mother, is taught from the beginning to regard her dress as a momentous concern. She is instructed in embroidery merely that she may finish a piece of work, which from time to time is to be brought out, to be seen, admired, and praised by visitors; or framed, and hung up in the room, to be still more frequently seen, admired and praised. She is taught music, only that she may perform a few times, to excite the same admiration, and applause, for her skill on the forte piano. She is taught to draw, merely to finish a picture, which, when richly framed, and ornamented, is hung up, to become an altar for the same incense.

The reading of girls is regularly lighter than that of boys. When the standard of reading for boys is

set too low, that for girls will be proportionally lowered. Where boys investigate books of sound philosophy, and labour in mathematical and logical pursuits; girls read history, the higher poetry, and judicious discourses in morality, and religion. When the utmost labour of boys is bounded by history, biography, and the pamphlets of the day: girls sink down to songs, novels, and plays.

Of this reading what, let me ask, are the consequences? By the first novel which she reads, she is introdued into a world, literally new. Instead of houses, inhabited by mere men, women and children, she is presented with a succession of splendid palaces, and gloomy castles inhabited by tenants, half human and half angelic, or haunted by downright fiends. Every thing in the character and circumstances, of these beings comes at the wish, or the call of the enchanter. Whatever can supply their wants, suit their wishes, or forward, or frustrate, their designs, is regularly at hand. The heroes are as handsome, as dignified, as brave, as generous, as affectionate, as faithful, and as accomplished, as he supposes will satisfy the demands of his readers. At the same time, they have always a *quantum sufficit* of money: or, if not, some relation, dies at the proper time, and leaves them an ample supply. Every heroine is, also a compound of all that is graceful and lovely. Her person is fashioned "by the hand of harmony." Her complexion outvies the snow, and shames the rose.

I know, that this education is expressly attempted with a view to superiour refinement: but it is not a refinement of the taste, the understanding, or the heart. It is merely a refinement of the imagination; of an imagination, already soft, and sickly; of a

sensibility, already excessive; of a relish, already fastidious. To a genuine perfection of taste it bears no more resemblance, than the delicate white of decay to the native fairness of complexion; or than the blush of a hectic to the bloom of health.

107. A Learned Blacksmith

By Elihu Burritt (1825)

I was the youngest of many brethren, and my parents were poor. My means of education were limited to the advantages of a district school; and those, again, were circumscribed by my father's death, which deprived me, at the age of fifteen, of those scanty opportunities which I had previously enjoyed. A few months after his death, I apprenticed myself to a blacksmith in my native village. Thither I carried an indomitable taste for reading, which I had previously acquired through the medium of the social library, all the historical works in which I had at that time read. At the end of a little more than half of my apprenticeship, I suddenly conceived the idea of studying Latin. Through the assistance of an elder brother, who had himself obtained a college education by his own exertions, I completed my Virgil during the evenings of one winter. After some time devoted to Cicero, and a few other Latin authors, I commenced Greek. At this time it was necessary that I should devote every hour of daylight, and a part of the evening, to the duties of my apprenticeship. Still I carried my Greek grammar in my hat, and often found a moment, when I was

heating some large iron, when I could place my book open before me, against the chimney of my forge, and go through with *tupto, tupteis, tuptei*, unperceived by my fellow-apprentices, and, sometimes with a detrimental effect to the charge in my fire. At evening I sat down, unassisted and alone, to the Iliad of Homer, twenty books of which measured my progress in that language during the evenings of another winter.

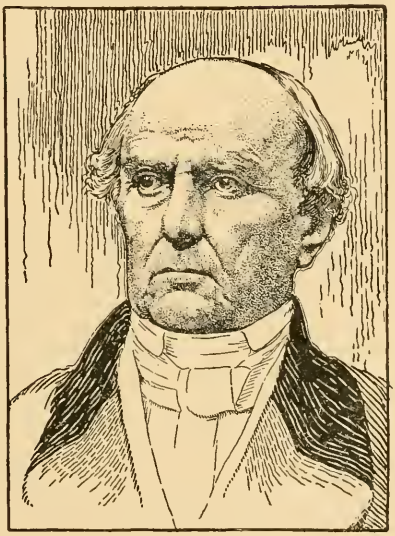
I next turned to the modern languages, and was much gratified to learn that my knowledge of Latin furnished me with a key to the literature of most of the languages of Europe. This circumstance gave a new impulse to the desire of acquainting myself with the philosophy, derivation and affinity of the different European tongues. I could not be reconciled to limit myself, in these investigations, to a few hours, after the arduous labors of the day. I therefore laid down my hammer and went to New Haven, where I recited to native teachers, in French, Spanish, German, and Italian. At the expiration of two years I returned to the forge, bringing with me such books in those languages as I could procure. When I had read these books through, I commenced the Hebrew, with an awakened desire for examining another field; and, by assiduous application, I was enabled, in a few weeks, to read this language with such facility that I allotted it to myself, as a task, to read two chapters in the Hebrew Bible, before breakfast, each morning; this and an hour at noon being all the time that I could devote to myself during the day.

After becoming somewhat familiar with the Hebrew, I looked around me for the means of initiating myself into the fields of Oriental literature, and to my deep regret and concern, I found my progress in this

direction hedged up by the want of requisite books. I immediately began to devise means of obviating this obstacle; and, after many plans, I concluded to seek a place as a sailor, on board some ship bound to Europe, thinking in this way to have opportunities for collecting, at different ports, such works in the modern and Oriental languages as I found necessary for my object. I left the forge and my native place, to carry out this plan. I travelled on foot to Boston, a distance of more than a hundred miles, to find some vessel bound to Europe. In this I was disappointed; and while revolving in my mind what step next to take, I accidentally heard of the American Antiquarian Society, in Worcester. I immediately bent my steps towards this place. I visited the hall of the Antiquarian Society, and found there, to my infinite gratification, such a collection of ancient, modern, and Oriental languages as I never before conceived to be collected in one place; and, sir, you may imagine with what sentiments of gratitude I was affected, when, upon evincing a desire to examine some of these rich and rare works, I was kindly invited to an unlimited participation in all the benefits of this noble institution. Availing myself of the kindness of the directors, I spent about three hours, daily, at the hall, which with an hour at noon, and three in the evening, make up the portion of the day which I appropriate to my studies, the rest being occupied in arduous manual labor. Through the facilities afforded by this institution, I have been able to add so much to my previous acquaintance with the ancient, modern, and Oriental languages as to be able to read upwards of fifty of them with more or less facility.

108. The New Hampshire Schoolboy

By Daniel Webster (1829)



ONCE A SCHOOLBOY.
(DANIEL WEBSTER.)

I do not remember when or by whom I was taught to read; because I cannot and never could recollect a time when I could not read the Bible. I suppose I was taught by my mother, or by my elder sisters. My father seemed to have no higher object in the world, than to educate his children, to the full extent of his very limited ability. No means were within his reach, generally speaking, but the small town schools. These were kept by teachers, sufficiently indifferent, in the several neighborhoods of the township, each a small part of the year. To these I was sent, with the other children.

When the school was in our neighborhood, it was easy to attend; when it removed to a more distant district I followed it, still living at home. While yet

quite young, and in winter, I was sent daily two and a half or three miles to the school. When it removed still further, my father sometimes boarded me out, in a neighboring family, so that I could still be in the school.

In these schools, nothing was taught but reading and writing; and, as to these, the first I generally could perform better than the teacher, and the last a good master could hardly instruct me in; writing was so laborious, irksome, and repulsive an occupation to me always. My masters used to tell me, that they feared, after all, my fingers were destined for the plough-tail.

I must do myself the justice to say that, in those boyish days, there were two things I did dearly love: reading and playing.

At a very early day, owing I believe mainly to the exertions of Mr. Thompson, the lawyer, the clergyman, and my father, a very small circulating library had been bought. I obtained some of these books, and read them. I remember the "Spectator" among them.

I was fond of poetry. By far the greater part of Dr. Watts's Psalms and Hymns I could repeat from memory at ten or twelve years of age. I am sure that no other sacred poetry will ever appear to me so affecting and devout.

I remember that my father brought home from some of the lower towns Pope's "Essay on Man," published in a sort of pamphlet. I took it, and very soon could repeat it, from beginning to end. We had so few books that to read them once or twice was nothing. We thought they were all to be got by heart.

It so happened, that within the few months during which I was at the Exeter Academy, Mr. Thacher, now judge of the Municipal Court of Boston, and Mr. Emery, the distinguished counsellor at Portland, were my instructors. I am proud to call them both masters. I believe I made tolerable progress in most branches which I attended to, while in this school; but there was one thing I could not do. I could not make a declamation. I could not speak before the school. The kind excellent Buckminster sought, especially, to persuade me to perform the exercise of declamation, like other boys; but I could not do it. Many a piece did I commit to memory, and recite and rehearse, in my own room, over and over again; yet when the day came, when the school collected to hear declamations, when my name was called, and I saw all eyes turned to my seat, I could not raise myself from it. Sometimes the instructors frowned, sometimes they smiled. Mr. Buckminster always pressed, and entreated, most winningly, that I would venture; but I could never command sufficient resolution. When the occasion was over, I went home and wept bitter tears of mortification.

In February, 1797, my father carried me to the Rev. Samuel Wood's, in Boscawen, and placed me under the tuition of that most benevolent and excellent man. It was but half a dozen miles from our own house. On the way to Mr. Wood's, my father first intimated to me his intention of sending me to college. The very idea thrilled my whole frame. He said he then lived but for his children, and if I would do all I could for myself, he would do what he could for me. I remember that I was quite overcome, and my head grew dizzy. The thing appeared to me so

high, and the expense and sacrifice it was to cost my father, so great, I could only press his hands and shed tears.

Mr. Wood accomplished his promise, and I entered Dartmouth College, as a Freshman, August, 1797. At Boscawen, I had found another circulating library, and had read many of its volumes. I remember especially that I found "Don Quixote," in the common translation, and in an edition, as I think, of three or four duodecimo volumes. I began to read it, and it is literally true that I never closed my eyes till I had finished it; nor did I lay it down for five minutes; so great was the power of that extraordinary book on my imagination.

109. The District School-house

By Reverend Warren Burton (1833)

The Old School-house in District No. 5 stood on the top of a very high hill, on the north side of what was called the County road. The house of Capt. Clark, about ten rods off, was the only human dwelling within a quarter of a mile. The reason why this seminary of letters was perched so high in the air, and so far from the homes of those who resorted to it, was this: here was the centre of the district, as near as surveyor's chain could designate. The people east would not permit the building to be carried one rod further west, and those of the opposite quarter were as obstinate on their side. So here it was placed; and this continued to be literally the "hill of science" to generation after generation of learners for fifty years.

The edifice was set half in Capt. Clark's field, and half in the road. The wood-pile lay in the corner made by the east end and the stone wall. The best roof it ever had over it was the changeful sky, which was a little too leaky to keep the fuel at all times fit for combustion, without a great deal of puffing and smoke. The door-step was a broad unhewn rock, brought from the neighboring pasture. It had not a flat and even surface, but was considerably sloping from the door to the road; so that, in icy times, the scholars, in passing out, used to snatch from the scant declivity the transitory pleasure of a slide. But look out for a slip-up, ye careless; for many a time have I seen urchin's head where his feet were but a second before, and once the most lofty and perpendicular pedagogue I ever knew, became suddenly horizontalized in his egress.

But we have lingered round this door-step long enough. Before we cross it, however, let us just glance at the outer side of the structure. It was never painted by man; but the clouds of many years had stained it with their own dark hue. The nails were starting from their fastness, and fellow-clapboards were becoming less closely and warmly intimate. There were six windows, which here and there stopped and distorted the passage of light by fractures, patches, and seams of putty. There were shutters of board, like those of a store, which were of no kind of use, excepting to keep the windows from harm in vacations, when they were the least liable to harm. They might have been convenient screens against the summer sun, were it not that their shade was inconvenient darkness. Some of these, from loss of buttons, were fastened back by

poles, which were occasionally thrown down in the heedlessness of play, and not replaced till repeated slams had broken a pane of glass, or the patience of the teacher. To crown this description of externals, I must say a word about the roof. The shingles had been battered apart by a thousand rains; and, excepting where the most defective had been exchanged for new ones, they were dingy with the mold and moss of time. The bricks of the chimney-top were losing their cement, and looked as if some high wind might hurl them from their smoky vocation.

We will now go inside. First, there is an entry which the district were sometimes provident enough to store with dry pine wood, as an antagonist to the greenness and wetness of the other fuel. A door on the left admits us to the school room. Here is a space about twenty feet long and ten wide, the reading and spelling parade. At the south end of it, at the left as you enter, was one seat and writing bench, making a right angle with the rest of the seats. This was occupied in the winter by two of the oldest boys in the school. At the opposite end was the magisterial desk, raised upon a platform a foot from the floor. The fire-place was on the right, halfway between the door of entrance and another door leading into a dark closet, where the girls put their outside garments and their dinner baskets. This also served as a fearful dungeon for the immuring of offenders. Directly opposite the fire-place was an aisle, two feet and a half wide, running up an inclined floor to the opposite side of the room. On each side of this were five or six long seats and writing benches, for the accommodation of the school at their studies. In front of these, next to the spell-

ing floor, were low, narrow seats for abecedarians and others near that rank. In general, the older the scholar, the further from the front was his location. The windows behind the back seat were so low that the traveler could generally catch the stealthy glance of curiosity as he passed. Such was the Old Schoolhouse at the time I first entered it.

110. A Wonderful Speller

By Reverend Warren Burton (1833)

The most extraordinary spelling, and indeed reading machine, in our school, was a boy whom I shall call Memorus Wordwell. He was mighty and wonderful in the acquisition and remembrance of words, — of signs without the ideas signified. The alphabet he acquired at home before he was two years old. What exultation of parents, what exclamation from admiring visitors! "There was never any thing like it." He had almost accomplished his A-b's before he was thought old enough for school. At an earlier age than usual, however, he was sent; and then he went from *Ache* to *Abomination* in half the summers and winters it took the rest of us to go over the same space.

Master Wordwell was a remarkable reader too. He could rattle off a word as extensive as the name of a Russian noble, when he was but five years old, as easily as the schoolmaster himself. "He can read in the hardest chapters of the Testament as fast agin as I can," said his mother. "I never did see nothin beat it," exclaimed his father; "he speaks up

as loud as a minister." But I have said enough about this prodigy. I have said thus much, because, although he was thought so surpassingly bright, he was the most decided ninny in the school. The fact is, he did not know what the sounds he uttered meant. It never entered his head, nor the heads of his parents and most of his teachers, that words and sentences were written, and should be read, only to be understood.

It happened one day that the "cut and split" for the fire fell short, and Jonas Patch was out wielding the axe in school time. He had been at work about half an hour, when Memorus, who was perceived to have less to do than the rest, was sent out to take his place. He was about ten years old, and four years younger than Jonas. "Memorus, you may go out and spell Jonas." Our hero did not think of the Yankee sense in which the master used the word spell: indeed, he had never attached but one meaning to it, whenever it was used with reference to himself. He supposed the master was granting him a ride extraordinary on his favorite hobby. So he put his spelling-book under his arm, and was out at the woodpile with the speed of a boy rushing to play.

"Have you got your spelling-lesson, Jonas?" was his first salutation. "Haven't looked at it yet," was the reply. "I mean to cut up this great log, spelling or no spelling, before I go in. I had as lieve keep warm here choppin wood, as freeze up there in that cold back seat." "Well, the master sent me out to hear you spell." "Did he? well, put out the words, and I'll spell." Memorus being so distinguished a speller, Jonas did not doubt but that he was really

sent out on this errand. So our deputy spelling-master mounted the top of the woodpile, just in front of Jonas, to put out words to his temporary pupil, who still kept on putting out chips.

"Do you know where the lesson begins, Jonas?" "No, I don't; but I 'spose I shall find out now." "Well, here 'tis." (They both belonged to the same class.) "Spell A-bom-i-na-tion." Jonas spells. A-b-o-m bom a-bom (in the mean time up goes the axe high in air), i a-bom-i (down it goes again chuck into the wood) n-a na a-bom-i-na (up it goes again) t-i-o-n tion, a-bom-i-na-tion; chuck the axe goes again, and at the same time out flies a furious chip, and hits Memorus on the nose. At this moment the master appeared just at the corner of the school-house, with one foot still on the threshold. "Jonas, why don't you come in? didn't I send Memorus out to spell you?" "Yes, sir, and he has been spelling me; how could I come in if he spelt me here?" At this the master's eye caught Memorus perched upon the top stick, with his book open upon his lap, rubbing his nose, and just in the act of putting out the next word of the column. Ac-com-mo-da-tion, pronounced Memorus in a broken but louder voice than before; for he had caught a glimpse of the master, and he wished to let him know that he was doing his duty. This was too much for the master's gravity. He perceived the mistake, and, without saying more, wheeled back into the school-room, almost bursting with the most tumultuous laugh he ever tried to suppress. The scholars wondered at his looks, and grinned in sympathy. But in a few minutes Jonas came in, followed by Memorus with his spelling-book, who exclaimed, "I have heard him spell through the

whole lesson, and he didn't spell hardly any of them right." The master could hold in no longer, and the scholars perceived the blunder, and there was one simultaneous roar from pedagogue and pupils; the scholars laughing twice as loud and uproariously in consequence of being permitted to laugh in school-time, and to do it with the accompaniment of the master.

111. Little Books presented the Last Day of School

By Reverend Warren Burton (1833)

There was one circumstance connected with the history of summer schools of so great importance to little folks that it must not be omitted. It was this. The mistress felt obliged to give little books to all her pupils on the closing day of her school. Otherwise she would be thought stingy, and half the good she had done during the summer would be canceled by the omission of the expected donations. If she had the least generosity, or hoped to be remembered with any respect and affection, she must devote a week's wages, and perhaps more, to the purchase of these little toy-books. My first present was from Mary Smith. It was not a little book the first summer, but it was something that pleased me more.

The last day of the school had arrived. All, as I have somewhere said before, were sad that it was now to finish. My only solace was that I should now have a little book, for I was not unmoved in the general expectation that prevailed. After the read-

ing and spelling, and all the usual exercises of the school, were over, Mary took from her desk a pile of the glittering little things we were looking for. What beautiful covers, — red, yellow, blue, green! Oh! not the first buds of spring, not the first rose of summer, not the rising moon, nor gorgeous rainbow,



FROM AN OLD SCHOOL BOOK.

seemed so charming as that first pile of books now spread out on her lap, as she sat in her chair in front of the school. All eyes were now centered on the outspread treasures. Pleasure glowed in every heart; for the worst, as well as the best, calculated with certainty on a present. The scholars were called out one by one to receive the dazzling gifts, beginning at the oldest. I, being an abecedarian, must wait till

the last; but as I knew that my turn would surely come in due order, I was tolerably patient. But what was my disappointment, my exceeding bitterness of grief, when the last book on Mary's lap was given away, and my name not yet called! Every one present had received, except myself and two others of the A B C rank. I felt the tears starting to my eyes; my lips were drawn to their closest pucker to hold in my emotions from audible outcry. I heard my fellow-sufferer at my side draw long and heavy breaths, the usual preliminaries to the bursting-out of grief. This feeling, however, was but momentary; for Mary immediately said, "Charles and Henry and Susan, you may now all come to me together:" at the same time her hand was put into her work-bag. We were at her side in an instant, and in that time she held in her hand — what? Not three little picture-books, but what was to us a surprising novelty, viz., three little birds wrought from sugar by the confectioner's art. I had never seen or heard or dreamed of such a thing. What a revulsion of delighted feeling now swelled my little bosom! "If I should give you books," said Mary, "you could not read them at present; so I have got for you what you will like better perhaps, and there will be time enough for you to have books when you shall be able to read them. So, take these little birds, and see how long you can keep them." We were perfectly satisfied, and even felt ourselves distinguished above the rest. My bird was more to me than all the songsters in the air, although it could not fly or sing, or open its mouth. I kept it for years, until by accident it was crushed to pieces, and was no longer a bird.

But Susan Clark — I was provoked at her. Her

bird was nothing to her but a piece of pepperminted sugar, and not a keepsake from Mary Smith. She had not left the schoolhouse before she had nibbled off its bill. But her mother was always tickling her palate with sugar-plums, raisins, cookies, and such like, which the rest of us were not accustomed to; and she had no idea that the sweet little sugar bird was made, at least was given, for the sake of her heart rather than her palate.

The next summer, my present was the "Death and Burial of Cock Robin." This was from the dearly loved Mary too. I could then do something more than look at the pictures. I could read the tragic history which was told in verse below the pictured representations of the mournful drama. How I used to gaze and wonder at what I saw in that little book! Could it be that all this really took place; that the sparrow really did do the murderous deed with his bow and his arrow? I never knew that birds had such things. Then there was the fish with his dish, the rook with his book, the owl with his shovel. Yet, if it were not all true, why should it be so pictured and related in the book? I had the impression that every thing that was printed in a book was surely true; and as no one thought to explain to me the nature of a fable, I went on puzzled and wondering till progressive reason at length divined its meaning. But Cock Robin, with its red cover and gilded edges — I have it now. It is the first little book I ever received, and it was from Mary Smith; and, as it is the only tangible memento of her goodness that I possess, I shall keep it as long as I can.

112. Entrance Examinations for Harvard

By John Adams (1757) and Dr. Samuel Kirkland Lothrop (1821)

I

Mr. Marsh was a son of our former minister of that name, who kept a private boarding school but two doors from my father's. To this school I went, where I was kindly treated, and I began to study in earnest. My father soon observed the relaxation of my zeal for fowling piece, and my daily increasing attention to my books. In a little more than a year Mr. Marsh pronounced me fitted for college. On the day appointed at Cambridge for the examination of candidates for admission I mounted my horse and called upon Mr. Marsh, who was to go with me. The weather was dull and threatened rain. Mr. Marsh said he was unwell and afraid to go out. I must therefore go alone. Thunderstruck at this unforeseen disappointment, and terrified at the thought of introducing myself to such great men as the President and Fellows of a college, I at first resolved to return home; but foreseeing the grief of my father and apprehending he would not only be offended with me but my master too whom I sincerely loved, I aroused myself, and collected resolution enough to proceed. Although Mr. Marsh had assured me that he had seen one of the tutors the last week and had said to him all that was proper for him to say if he should go to Cambridge, that he was not afraid to trust me to an examination and was confident I should acquit my-

self well and be honourably admitted; yet I had not the same confidence in myself and suffered a very melancholy journey. Arrived at Cambridge I presented myself according to my directions and underwent the usual examination by the President Mr. Holyoke and the tutors Flint, Hancock, Mayhew and Marsh. Mr. Mayhew into whose class we were to be admitted, presented me a passage of English to translate into Latin. It was long and casting my eye over it I found several words the Latin for which did not occur to my memory. Thinking that I must translate it without a dictionary, I was in a great fright and expected to be turned by, an event that I dreaded above all things. Mr. Mayhew went into his study and bid me follow him. "There child," said he, "is a dictionary, there a grammar, and there paper, pen, and ink, and you may take your own time." This was joyful news to me and I then thought my admission safe. The Latin was soon made. I was declared admitted and a theme given me to write on in the vacation. I was as light when I came home as I had been heavy when I went: my master was well pleased and my parents very happy.

II

On Monday morning Dr. Kirkland, as he was leaving the breakfast-table, said that he would like to see me in his study at a quarter before nine. When I presented myself he gave two little taps of his feet upon the floor, and immediately I heard a movement in the room below, footsteps on the stairs, and a knock at the door. The "Come in" was answered by a young person, to whom Dr. Kirkland

said, "Emerson, this is my nephew, Master Lothrop, of whom I spoke to you." Emerson and myself shook hands, while my uncle continued, "I wish to put him under your instruction, for the present at least. Will you take him to your room, see where he is in his studies, and begin accordingly? Be careful not to make his lessons too long and difficult, because he is more accustomed to out-of-door life than to study. In his recitations and oral instruction I wish you to give him about an hour a day, from Monday to Friday inclusive." Emerson bowed, and said, "I will do the best I can, sir"; then turning to me, asked, "Will you come down to my room?" As soon as we got into his room he said, with a slight diminution of the dignity and authority manifested in presence of the President, "Lothrop — your Christian name; what is it?" I told him my name, and then made the same inquiry in regard to his; to which he replied, "My name is Ralph, — Ralph Waldo." Physically at least, the child was the father of the man; for he was very much the same person then in looks and manners that I have known him to be for the last forty years. He was about two years older than myself, and nearly as tall as when he had reached maturity, — a Saxon blonde, pale face, light hair, blue eyes. He was calm and quiet in his manners; and no matter how much he felt, externally he was never moved or excited. I think there was the same mingling of shyness, awkwardness, and dignity about him as a freshman in college that is often observed in him to-day.

The examination began at 6 A. M. Friday, was over by five in the afternoon, and between that and seven o'clock all the candidates got their answers. I passed a very good examination, but was conditioned

in Latin Grammar, — a book which at that time I could recite from beginning to end without a mistake. Dr. Kirkland, who examined me pretty strictly in the Georgics of Virgil, and made me parse several clauses, said, "I am a little surprised at your being conditioned in Latin Grammar. How came it?" I said, "I don't know, sir; I had only one question put to me, which I did not exactly understand, and almost instantly, while I was trying to make out what the question meant, Mr. Hunt said, 'That will do; sit down.'" My uncle made no remark; and Mr. Hunt, when I went to him to be re-examined in Latin Grammar, merely said, "Have you been studying it during the vacation?" I replied, "No, sir, I can't say that I have. I thought I could repeat the whole of it the day you conditioned me. Mr. Miles considered me perfectly prepared in Latin Grammar." "Well, well!" he said, "I don't care about hearing you repeat the whole of it now. I'll take Mr. Miles's opinion: you may go." And so I left, feeling that I should like to ask him if he thought it right to treat a young man in that way.

113. County School Houses

By Horace Mann (1838)

The school-houses in the state have a few common characteristics. They are almost universally contracted in size; they are situated immediately on the road-side, and are without any proper means of ventilation. In most other respects the greatest diversity prevails. The floors of some are horizontal; those of others rise in the form of an amphitheatre,

on two, or sometimes three sides, from an open area in the centre. On the horizontal floors, the seats and desks are sometimes designed only for a single scholar



TWO FAMOUS MEN.
(LONGFELLOW AND SUMNER.)

and allow the teacher room to approach on either side, and give an opportunity to go out or into the seat, without disturbance of any one. In others, ten

scholars are seated on one seat, and at one desk, so that the middle ones can neither go out nor in without disturbing, at least, four of their neighbors. In others, again, long tables are prepared, at which the scholars sit face to face, like large companies at dinner. In others the seats are arranged on the sides of the room, the walls of the house forming the backs of the seats, and the scholars, as they sit at the desks, facing inwards; while in others, the desks are attached to the walls, and the scholars face outwards.

The form of school-houses is, with very few exceptions, that of a square or oblong. Some, however, are round, with an open circular area in the centre of the room, for the teacher's desk and a stove, with seats and desks around the wall, facing outwards, separated from each other by high partitions, which project some distance into the room, so that the scholars may be turned into these separate compartments, as into so many separate stalls. In no particular does chance seem to have had so much sway as in regard to light. In many, so much of the wall is occupied by windows, that there is little difference between the intensity and the changes of light within and without the school-room; while in some others, there is but one small window on each of the three sides of the house and none on the fourth.

114. A Very Young Schoolmistress

By Mrs. Wyatt

Before I was thirteen, I had an invitation to teach a school in Meaderborough, in the upper part of Rochester, N.H. I commenced the school under



MARTHA LAURENS.

favorable auspices, with eighteen or twenty scholars, young men and women, and three babies. It was my first effort, and never did I do better. I was young and strove to excel. The school was popular and I gained much credit, as a teacher.

Schools then, were not as now, filled up with all branches necessary to make a finished education, in these modern times. The only branches taught were reading, spelling, and writing. But little was thought in those days of the education of daughters. To read and write, with a smattering of geography and arithmetic were considered the height of female education. The minds of girls were then considered to be inadequate to struggle with the higher branches of education, which they now master so readily.

The only books then used in school were Webster's spelling book, the Testament, and the Third Part, for the upper class.

My school was in good order. Special attention was given to the manners of the pupils. They were taught how to enter and leave the school-room. They were not allowed to run in, and out, like a flock of sheep, passing over a gap of wall. The bow of the little boy was something more than a nod over the shoulder, by just turning the neck askew, and bending it to one side. The courtesy of the little girl was practised, till it could be gracefully performed. The manner even of walking to and from their seats, was not neglected.

By strict attention to these little matters, the young school-marm soon gained a reputation. Her school was famous through the whole region. The parents scarcely knew their own children, so much were they improved. Parents, teachers and pupils, all came to

see the school, and went away to praise the teacher. A schoolmistress in those days was a wonder, and especially one so young as thirteen. I closed this, my first school, with more than the approbation of all concerned.

115. A First-Honor Boy

By J. Marion Sims (1819)

When I was six years old, my father sent me to a boarding-school, some six or eight miles from home. The teacher here was an Irishman, Mr. Quigley, a man about fifty-five years old, and a rigid disciplinarian; altogether very tyrannical, and sometimes cruel. He was badly pock-marked, otherwise a handsome man. I was very unhappy at his house. He had two grown daughters; one of the daughters was very unkind to me, the other was sympathetic.

A very curious custom prevailed in this school, which was that the boy who arrived earliest in the morning was at the head of his class during the day, and was considered the first-honor boy. The one who arrived second took the second place, and so on. There was a great rivalry among some half-dozen of the most ambitious of the boys. James Graham was about ten years old. He was almost always first in the morning. Although I was so very young, only six, I occasionally made efforts to get there earlier than he did. I suppose the school-house was not more than three-quarters of a mile from the teacher's residence where I boarded; but it seemed to me, at the time, that it was very much farther than that. However, the boy that got ahead of James Graham

had to rise very early in the morning. I remember getting up one morning long before daybreak.

The dread of my young life was mad dogs and runaway slaves. I started off for the school-house on a trot, an hour before day, looking anxiously from side to side, and before and behind, fearing all the time those two great bugbears of my young life. When I arrived at the school-house the wind was blowing very severely. It was in the autumn; the acorns were falling on the clap-boards covering the log-cabin, and I didn't feel very comfortable, and was most anxious for James Graham to come. At last he arrived, greatly to my relief. This was my first and last first-honor day. I was content after this to resign this post to James Graham.

My father came to see me but once during the six months I was in this school. My mother came to see me about once a month. I was dying to tell her of the bad treatment I received from the teacher and from one of his daughters. The old gentleman was very obstinate, and not only punished me unnecessarily at school, but he would not let me have what I wanted to eat, and would compel me to eat things absolutely distasteful to me. I wished to tell my mother of all this; of how Miss Nelly used to box my ears and pull my hair, and how old Quigley used to punish me, but I was too closely watched. I could never get her to one side, never see her alone. At last I became desperate: right in the presence of the whole family I told the whole truth of the severe treatment that I had endured ever since I had been there, and that she must take me home; if she didn't, I would run away and leave the place even if I were captured by runaway slaves and de-

voured by mad dogs. I would have run away long before, but for this dread.

As soon as my mother went home, and told my father what had occurred, he sent and removed me to my own home again, where I was as happy as the day was long. I must say, however, that, in spite of all the disagreeable things of this school, they managed to make the boys learn. I used to lie awake nights, and think about what I could do to get home. Then it was that the idea of an elevated road came into my mind strongly. My idea was that all little boys placed at boarding-schools should have a trough reaching from the school to their homes, elevated on posts and girders, ten feet above ground, so that they could climb up and get into this trough and run home without the fear of either mad dogs or runaway slaves.

116. A Little American Girl in a French Convent

By Martha Jefferson (1785)

I am very happy in the convent, and with reason, for there wants nothing but the presence of my friends of America to render my situation worthy to be envied by the happiest; I do not say kings, for, far from it, they are often more unfortunate than the lowest of their subjects. I have seen the king and the queen, but at too great a distance to judge if they are like their pictures in Philadelphia. We had a lovely passage in a beautiful new ship, that had made one passage before. There were only six passengers,

all of whom Papa knew, and we had fine sunshine all the way, with a sea which was as calm as a river.

We landed in England, where we made a very short stay. The day we left it we got off at six o'clock in the evening, and arrived in France at eleven the next morning. I cannot say that this voyage was as agreeable as the first, though it was much shorter. It rained violently, and the sea was exceedingly rough all the time, and I was almost as sick as the first time, when I was sick two days. The cabin was not more than three feet wide and about four long. There was no other furniture than an old bench, which was fast to the wall. The door by which we came in was so little that one was obliged to enter on all-fours. There were two little doors on the side of the cabin, the way to our beds, which were composed of two boxes and a couple of blankets, without either spring or mattress, so that I was obliged to sleep in my clothes. There being no window in the cabin, we were obliged to stay in the dark, for fear of the rain coming in if we opened the door.

I fear we should have fared badly at our arrival, for Papa spoke very little French, and I not a word, if an Irish gentleman, an entire stranger to us, had not seen our embarrassment, and been so good as to conduct us to a house; he was of great service to us. It is amazing to see how they cheat strangers; it cost Papa as much to have the baggage brought from the shore to the house, which was about half a square, as the bringing it from Philadelphia to Boston.

From there we should have had a very delightful voyage to Paris, for Havre de Grace is built at the mouth of the Seine, and we follow the river all the

way through the most beautiful country I ever saw in my life, — it is a perfect garden ; — but the singularity of our carriage (a phaeton) attracted the attention of all we met; and whenever we stopped we were surrounded by the beggars. One day I counted no less than nine where we stopped to change horses.

I wish you could have been with us when we arrived, I am sure you would have laughed, for we were obliged to send immediately for the stay-maker, the mantua-maker, the milliner, and even a shoemaker, before I could go out. I have never had the *friseur* but once; but I soon got rid of him, and turned down my hair in spite of all they could say. I have seen two nuns take the veil. I'll tell you about that when I come to see you.

I was placed in a convent at my arrival, and I leave you to judge of my situation. I did not speak a word of French, and not one here knew English but a little girl of two years old, that could hardly speak French. There are about fifty or sixty *pensioners* in the house, so that speaking as much as I could with them, I learnt the language very soon. At present I am charmed with my situation. There come in some new pensioners every day. The *classe* is four rooms, exceedingly large, for the pensioners to sleep in ; and there is a fifth and sixth, one for them to stay in the day, and the other in which they take their lessons. We wear the uniform, which is crimson, made like a frock, laced behind, with the tail, like a *robe de cour*, hooked on, muslin cuffs and tuckers. The masters are all very good, except that for the drawing.

117. Squib on the Art of Writing

By Francis Hopkinson (1780)

Genius is the gift of heaven, and manifests itself by emanations altogether unexpected and surprising. Its powers are not to be obtained by application and study, but they may be assisted by art. When genius hath brought forth, art takes up and nurses the child, and carefully consulting its features, deduces rules for a happy conception.

Such being the connection between genius and art it is but reasonable that a mutual intercourse of good offices should subsist between them.

For my own part, I must confess that nature hath not been over bountiful to me in the article of genius; but I am desirous of exerting the little she hath given in behalf of those who may have no more than myself.

For this purpose I have devised a method of writing on any subject. In it not only the sound may be an echo to the sense, if any sense there be, but the eye also shall be gratified with an exhibition of mechanical elegance and propriety. This is the only elegance perhaps to which such writers can attain.

By this scheme the construction of a paragraph, the progress of a line, and even the disposition of the words, may all contribute to enforce the idea intended.

It would be a tedious task to form a system of rules for this new method of writing, or to give a description at large of my useful device. One example will fully explain the whole, so as to enable an author of the meanest capacity to understand and profit by the design. A little practice will make it familiar to him.

A SAMPLE OF GOOD WRITING.

An author who wishes to height to the rise of excellence of *good writing*, must condescend to call in mechanical propriety to his aid. He cannot be sublime: all at once but gradually descending to the profound, should as gradually rise to elegance, frequently forming a serpentine line, in which, according to Hogarth, the beauty of all things consists.

And whether he writes in plain prose;

> Or would in verse his thoughts convey,
> His rhyming talents to display;

and the diction strict propriety should prevail, and the sense run parallel to each other; pleasing as well the eye as the ear.

Some have a happy talent for expression, whereby they compensate for the want of sentiment by the enchanting melody of their style. Their language

ever flowing like the waves of the sea, and their periods closing in such musical cadence, that the ear is fascinated by the magic of sound,

and the mind lull'd in a pleasing repose.

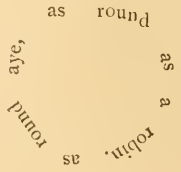
Others, without giving to grammar rules offence, shall arrange so unskilfully their words; breaking as it were, and interrupting the sense (or rather nonsense) they mean to communicate, by frequent (and oft times unnecessary) parenthesis, that the ear stumbles over their rugged paragraphs, as the feet would stumble in scrambling through a street, when the

pave ment had been broken up; over stones bricks, and posts, mixed together con fu sed ly.

The mind of the reader is more fa-------ti------- gu---------ed by travelling through a sentence so constructed, than it would be in gliding through a whole page of harmonious phraseology.

Your precise grammarians are most apt to write in this style, thinking that they have well acquitted themselves, if the strict rules of syntax are in no instance violated. The laborer who mixes the mortar, and he who carries the hod, may as well pretend to skill in architecture, as these haberdashers of moods and tenses may pretend to taste and elegance in composition.

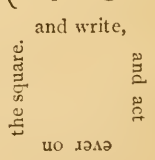
Others there are who affect a singularity of above style It is indubitable verity, that their the vulgar. phrases are collated from the most approved authors, and applied with the most becoming aptitude, even to the very point of precision in propriety. Every period is polished and rounded off



Whilst others scorn the

O R N A M E N T S

of language, deal in demonstration



By the foregoing example it is evident, that not only an author's sentiments may be more forcibly impressed on the mind, but the reader's memory will also be greatly assisted, if happily anything so written should be worth remembering.

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